REX REGUM

At the Chilwick Press

MOSAIC IN THE BASILICA OF SS. COSMA È DAMIANO

LIBRARY EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

REX REGUM

A PAINTER'S STUDY OF THE LIKENESS OF CHRIST FROM THE TIME OF THE APOSTLES TO THE PRESENT DAY

BY

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"SEVEN ANGELS OF THE RENASCENCE," ETC.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE GENERAL LITERATURE COMMITTEE

"Last of all he was seen of me also."

LONDON:
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE,
NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE, W.C.;
NEW YORK: E. S. GORHAM.
1905

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The following are a few Extracts from Reviews.

"Treats of no less a subject than the traditional Likeness of Christ, which has been kept in the Church with very little change from the earliest centuries of the Christian Era—at all events from a date anterior to Constantine."—*The Times.*

"Sir Wyke has written a masterly book."—*Daily Chronicle.*

"More full and careful probably than any of the many treatises which have preceded it."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"Of absorbing interest."—*Morning Post.*

"The volume is of much value, and of deep historic, artistic, and religious interest."—*Daily News.*

"Will profoundly interest a public both large and thoughtful."—*The Standard.*

"It commands serious attention by reason of the immense amount of careful and conscientious research embodied in it; and the dignity and beauty of the way he has treated his subject are worthy of his reputation as an artist and as a poet. . . . One of the most attractive and convincing theories on the subject we have ever met."—*Westminster Gazette.*

"Sir Wyke has made out a strong case."—*Birmingham Post.*

"No man is able to speak on the subject with greater authority—the work is an education in itself."—*Leeds Mercury.*

"Of surpassing interest to every Christian who cares for Art, and to every Artist who cares for Christ."—*Scotsman.*

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"The argument is exceedingly well maintained. The value of these careful studies lies, we would say, in the materials brought together."—*Speaker.*

"'Rex Regum' is a book that gives new interest to every likeness of Christ."—*Literature.*

"It is long since anything so interesting in connection with Art has appeared."—*Review of Reviews.*

"It is the justice, as much as the thoroughness of the research, and the thoughtfulness of the reasoning, which makes the book so valuable a contribution to the exposition of Christian antiquities." —*Athenæum.*

"Sir Wyke Bayliss has succeeded in bringing out the fact that a certain type, without doubt tracing back its origin to very early times, and maintaining itself unchanged in essentials, contains the elements of an attempt at portraiture rather than idealisation."—*Guardian.*

"We gladly recognise the voice of a master on a subject which must always command our deep respect and be full of interest to us."—*Church Times.*

"We must refer our readers, who desire light on the subject, to the pages of 'Rex Regum'—where the argument is presented in its fulness, with admirable pictorial illustrations."—*The Nonconformist.*

"The book has a value quite apart from the special purpose of the argument, on account of its reproductions of a series of representations of Christ from the early mosaics, frescoes, and other ancient remains, together with the works of the great artists from Giotto and Orcagna to Fritz von Uhde and Holman Hunt." —*Inquirer.*

"A very valuable mass of evidence to establish the main contention. A beautiful book, with fifty portraits, by ancient, mediæval, and modern artists, of Him who is 'Rex Regum' and 'Dominus dominantium.'"—*The Tablet.*

PREFACE

THE question whether we possess any authentic record of the Likeness of the Master, is one of profound and universal interest. It is not too much to say that every Christian who cares for Art, as surely as every Artist who cares for Christ, must desire to know whether the face we generally recognise as the face of our Saviour is a historical verity, or is only a creation of the imagination. My purpose in "Rex Regum" is to give to this question a definite answer, by gathering together the scattered evidences—historical, archæological, and artistic—which bear upon the subject, and examining them in the light of the most searching modern criticism.

If I venture to think that my purpose has in any measure been achieved, it is because I have succeeded in drawing into the discussion many men better than myself. Archæologists have re-examined their museums and discovered fresh evidence; Artists painting the Likeness have been happier for knowing it to be true; Divines

have taken it for their text—glad that another, an unnecessary, mystery has ceased to darken the records of Christianity. The First Edition of "Rex Regum" has been reviewed in more than two hundred journals—British, American, and Continental—representing every phase of thought—religious and secular, literary and artistic, Catholic and Protestant, Anglican and Nonconformist. In preparing a Library Edition it has been my delight as well as my duty to take account of this great array of judgment, to welcome fresh light, and to defend my conclusions where they have been unreasonably assailed.

I desire to express my grateful appreciation of the generous treatment I have received, not only from Reviewers, but from the Editors of many of our leading journals. In "The Contemporary Review," "The Guardian," "The Speaker," "The Saturday Review," "The Tablet," "The Church Times," "The Times," "The Morning Post," "The Daily Graphic," I have been given space for the purpose of correcting misconstructions of my arguments, or of illustrating them with further evidence. From no Editor or Reviewer, with one curious exception, have I received anything but courtesy. Some, of course, differ from me, as they differ from each other. It is by such differences, courteously expressed, that truth is ultimately established.

In an elaborate and scholarly review of "Rex Regum," which appeared in "The Daily Chronicle," it is said that "Sir Wyke Bayliss dwells lovingly upon the Masters in whose art the sacred likeness, without ceasing to keep spiritual kinship with the ruder achievements of crypt and catacomb, blossomed into light and glory. The last was implicit in the first, the first gave pledge and promise of the last:

> 'So the pale bud, where quietly it grows,
> Dreams itself on, superbly, to the rose.'

"Rex Regum" is full of curious considerations; some, perhaps, too curiously considered. It is a book to provoke controversy."

How elusive are the windings of thought in which we find ourselves entangled as we pursue this inquiry. And yet nothing can be more simple or direct than the argument itself. There is a face we know and recognise as the face of Christ. We trace its history, century by century, to the time of the Apostles, and we perceive that it has never changed. We discover further, that it was used, with portraits of the Apostles, by the immediate followers of Christ, in accordance with the custom of the period. What more do we ask?

See, all along the line difficulties are raised.

Impalpable shadows, for the most part, but none the less alarming to timid souls. Moreover, we find that proofs which seem irrefragable to some minds, count as nothing to others, or even tell in an opposite direction. It is as though art, archæology, history, theology, ceremonial observance, æsthetic feeling, religious emotion, acted on men's minds as prisms act on the sun's rays, deflecting or obscuring the vision. Perhaps it is only in the perfect balancing of all these, as in the perfect blending of the seven colours, that true light is to be found. If "Rex Regum" is curious, it is because of the curiousness of the objections with which it has to deal.

Let me give a typical instance which came within my personal knowledge. A meeting of clergymen was convened in London for the purpose of considering this strange new book "Rex Regum." One venerable minister said that "he knew nothing of Art—which was quite true—but that he hesitated to believe that the Holy Spirit would have permitted an artist to paint the face of our Divine Lord. He felt that a true representation of Christ, if it existed, would be a source of great danger—it would be so inestimably precious." It does not seem to have occurred to this clergyman that the Holy Spirit *has* permitted the face of Christ to be painted, in all ages of the

Church, in all places, to the comfort of countless millions of Christian souls, and that the only question at issue is whether the representations thus permitted are true or false. In all other questions this clergyman held that God is on the side of truth.

Another reverend speaker took the very opposite view. So far from admitting that a true Likeness would be inestimably precious, he said that "to himself it would have neither value nor interest. He saw no necessity for such a thing. We should all know Christ when He came—whether we found ourselves on His right hand or on His left." This is again no doubt true, but it is irrelevant. For the question whether the contemporaries of the Apostles cared to know what Christ was like does not turn upon our ideas of the Advent, but upon theirs—to whom the second coming meant the return of a friend, a figure long familiar to their eyes, a face to which at least five hundred of them would be ready to bear witness if need be, at Cæsar's bar.

Finally, a young priest, who had studied Art a little—a very little—at Oxford, and did not think much of the early Christian artists, but preferred Botticelli, remarked that "the Roman custom of portraiture took the form of sculpture, or the moulding of the features in wax, rather than painting, which required a free use of the brush."

He had not realised that the question is not one of technique, but of verisimilitude: that the existence of the sculptor proves the existence of the artist: and that the custom of moulding the features in wax is conclusive evidence that special attention was given by the artists of the day to actuality and veracity in portraiture.

When I turn, however, from a conference of Divines to a symposium of Artists, I do not find the same divergence of opinion. Lord Leighton, Sir John Millais, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Mr. G. F. Watts, and Mr. Holman Hunt have all told me that they concur in my argument: and although I have addressed many assemblies of artists on the subject I have never met a painter who did not believe that in the Likeness we have at least the true type. What can account for this diversity in the Church, where we should have expected unity? and unity in the studio, where we should have expected diversity? The Bishop of an English Diocese, who was himself a Professor of Archæology in his University, writes to me: "Besides the great and touching beauty of thought and word in 'Rex Regum,' one impression stands out very clearly in my mind,—that an artist has a power of seeing resemblances and detecting a prevalent type that I am quite without. I am very ready to believe that your artist eye is

right." This may be true or not; I base no argument upon it. I think rather that the explanation is to be found in the fact, that to the artist the question is more direct and simple than to the theologian. With the artist it is not complicated by other questions. He asks only for the truth, that he may put it upon his canvas, without the responsibility of "curious considerations" as to the use which may be made of it.

In the meantime the question—neglected by the Church—has become the battle-ground of a new attack upon Christianity. The Agnostic has not been slow to perceive that if the Likeness melts away as we look into the past, so also may Christ himself be made to disappear. M. de Mély, in a communication to the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres, declares that the commonly received Likeness has no authority—that until A.D. 325 Christ was always represented without a beard. "La Raison," the leading Agnostic journal of Paris, takes this as an admission that very likely the man we call Christ never existed. M. Genever, in "L'Intermediare des Chercheurs et des Curieux," explains the absence of a beard from many of the early frescoes by the supposition that Christ was crucified as a boy. Any supposition, however incoherent, or contradictory to historical records, seems good enough

to put forward, if only it can get rid of this ever-living, never-changing witness to the reality of the life of our Lord.

And how does the Church of Christ meet this new attack, with which the twentieth century opens? On the continent it is being met by the production of what is called the "Holy Shroud" of Turin. "Les Etudes," the official organ of the Society of Jesus, says that the only way to settle the controversy is to examine the shroud chemically. M. Waldeck-Rousseau, as Prime Minister of the French Republic, submits this suggestion, through the French Ambassador at Rome, to the King of Italy, who is the guardian of the shroud, and holds the key of the casket in which it is contained. In England the attack is being met in a different manner—by silence. Is the Likeness which we have held in our hands, ever since we became a Christian nation, true or false? We do not know! That is the reply which most Englishmen are content to give.

Is there then no answer except through silence or superstition? I think there is. I think that the Likeness should be more to us than a piece of fine linen, in which to bury a dead Christ. Its authenticity should be determined. And it can be determined, not by a Conference of Clergy, nor

by a Society of Antiquaries, nor by an Assembly of Artists, but by the classification and balancing of evidence drawn from all these sources. It is to this classification and balancing of the evidence that I have addressed myself. Every witness —whether for, or against—has been allowed free speech. In "Rex Regum" nothing has been withheld—nothing suppressed.

I rejoice that in no instance has the question been embittered with religious prejudice, or sectarian jealousy. Unhappily, Christians have quarrelled over the face of Christ as they have quarrelled over His words. But "Rex Regum" makes for peace. For, after all, "Rex Regum" is more than an argument for the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ—it is a Hymn to Christ. I know not why the Poet and the Musician should alone render tribute to the Redeemer. I believe that the tribute of the Painter is as legitimate in itself, and perhaps as acceptable to the Master, as are the crotchets and quavers, the iambics and trochaics we call Hymns of the Church.

Thus, in "Rex Regum," the Likeness of Christ becomes the visible charter of our brotherhood. Turning its pages we see the face of Christ as it is seen by the Holy Church throughout all the world. We see it as it was seen by the Masters of the Renascence; by the leaders of the Re-

formation ; by the early painters of the Awakening. Still turning its leaves we see it as the less enlightened, but faithful worshippers of the Middle Ages saw it, in the mosaics of the basilicas. Then we come upon the faded frescoes of the catacombs, which comforted and strengthened the faith of the young Church during the ten great persecutions. Finally we see the very pateræ, engraved with the Likeness, which S. Peter, S. Paul, and S. John may have held in their hands when administering the Lord's Supper. How all this affects the Church is not for me to inquire. "Rex Regum" is not an ecclesiastical treatise: it is a painter's study of the Likeness of Christ from the time of the Apostles to the present day. But it has made one thing clear. From the day when He said, "Lo! I am with you always even to the end"—the King of Kings has never left Himself without a witness in the studio of the artist.

APOLOGIA

I SHOULD like to place on record the circumstances which led me to the special study of this subject. Early in the seventies the late Mr. Thomas Heaphy and myself were fellow-members of the Royal Society of British Artists, and served on many committees. Our homes lay in the same direction, and after the close of a council we generally found ourselves walking together across the Park. It was during these walks, on summer evenings, or star-lit nights, that we first exchanged thoughts on the question, profoundly interesting to us both, of the authenticity of the commonly received Likeness of our Blessed Lord. Mr. Heaphy, who was considerably my senior, had made it a special study; and had devoted much thought and time and travel to its elucidation. He was, moreover, a portrait painter, so that he possessed exceptional facilities for recording his impressions with subtle insight and discriminating accuracy. In Italy and the south of France he had made many exquisite facsimile

drawings of the rarest and most remarkable examples, especially of the frescoes of the catacombs, some of which—after existing for more than a thousand years in the safety of darkness—had been brought to light only to perish before our eyes. I also, through my visits to the cathedrals of the continent, was not without some knowledge of these ancient treasures; so that we were never tired of comparing notes, and correcting our impressions, by the information we could give to each other on a matter so dear to us both.

These happy days, however, came all too soon to an end. One morning in 1873 I received a message from Mr. Heaphy who was taken with sudden illness. I hastened to his side, but it was a race with Death, and I never saw my friend again.

Mr. Heaphy, however, had left with his family a request that his drawings and MS. on the subject of the Likeness of Christ should be placed in my hands, and that I should advise as to what should be done with them. I undertook this labour of love, with the result that under my editorship the folio edition of "The Likeness of Christ" was published by David Bogue. It contains all that Mr. Heaphy had left in manuscript, or in articles contributed to magazines, together with photographic reproductions from the facsimiles he had himself made. His original drawings were then

purchased for, and are now preserved in, the Library of the British Museum.

My companion gone, and the task he had committed to me finished, I still pursued the study of the Likeness. Mr. Heaphy had taken with him to Italy letters from Cardinal Wiseman, which afforded him some assistance in his researches at the Vatican. But at that time the chief museum of Rome was very jealously guarded from the outside world, and Mr. Heaphy met with many hindrances. When it became my turn, however, to seek for an open sesame, I found one so potent that it left nothing to be desired. Cardinal Manning —with the courtesy for which he was so distinguished—gave me a letter, under his episcopal seal, which the Cardinals of the Vatican honoured by granting me access to the most sacred of the hidden treasures. Thus I was able not only to make fresh drawings, but to verify the researches of my friend.

I should like to say a word also as to the method of my argument—a method which, I believe, has never before been attempted. I discard from it all traditional stories of this or that supposed portrait. The evidence is much higher than that of any attestation of individual witnesses who may or may not speak the truth. The evidence is that of the Likeness itself, traced to the knowledge of

the contemporaries of the Apostles, and even to the knowledge of the Apostles themselves. And I ask the Reader to observe that my subject is not the likenesses of Christ, but the Likeness of Christ. Our knowledge of the Likeness is no doubt reached through the likenesses, but the two things are distinct, and must throughout the argument be clearly differentiated in the mind. The many likenesses we possess are links in the chain, but not one of them is the Likeness, any more than a single link is the chain.

My argument, therefore, cannot be judged by fragments. It is like a ship's cable, of which everybody on board can see the first few links, but of which the links plunged into the sea can be reached only by a diver. The safety of the ship depends on each link, and yet no single link independently of its fellows can hold the anchor. We see the Likeness to-day, and know whence it came to us: but it soon seems to disappear in the darkness of the past, as the cable disappears in the sea. But it is not really lost, and my purpose is to follow it link by link until we reach the end.

I shall ask my Readers, therefore, to go back with me, century by century, examining this Likeness of Christ and the source from which each school, or church, or period received it. I shall not overweight the argument by an unnecessary multiplication of examples. To show that it

existed before the time of the great painters is to show that the great painters did not invent it. Similarly, to show that it existed in the Roman period is to show that it was not a creation of the mediæval Church. To show finally that it existed in the time of the Apostles, and has never changed since then, is to show all that I desire. If it satisfied them it may well satisfy us.

The subject naturally divides into three parts. The first part—Yesterday—deals with the Likeness in its ancient form and surroundings; and with the evidences of its authenticity. The second part—To-day—takes up the history of the Likeness after the interregnum of a thousand years and shows what has been done with it by the great painters, including those of our own time. The third part—For Ever—is a brief *résumé* of the argument, and an aspiration that the face of Christ shall never fade from our eyes as have faded the faces of the old gods.

In entering upon such an enquiry as this we find ourselves at once in the midst of the long train of categories set forth by Aristotle. There is *substantia*—is it actual or is it only essential? There is *quantitas*—does it extend to colour and expression? or is it limited to form? There is *qualitas*—is it an imprint or a transcript? from sight or from memory? There is *relatio*—what

is its affinity to the pictures of the saints? or to our own portraits? There is *actio*—how does it affect us? There is *patientia*—what have we done with it? There is *locus*—where? there is *tempus*—when? there is *situs*—its setting? there is *vestitus*—its apparelment? Before argument can be founded on the Likeness these questions must be met and answered—and they constitute an appeal not only to the archæologia but to the humanities of the subject. If in the ordinary practice of Art we find elements which elude definition—how can we hope to define the unknown quantity arising from the union of two natures? In speaking of One whom we believe to be both human and Divine it is necessary to use figures of speech. The many likenesses of Christ all emanating from the same source—as the petals of a flower spring from the life of the flower—I have called the Rose of our garden, and have likened to the White Rose of the Paradise of God. The simile is not the same as that of Dante—

> "In forma dunque di candida rosa
> Mi si mostrava la milizia santa,
> Che nel suo sangue Christo fece sposa."

The White Rose of the Divina Commedia is the great company of the Redeemed—the petals are individual believers; and, as a rose, even a white rose, deepens with colour towards the heart of it,

so the wide circles of this saintly host, as they approach the centre, become incarnadine with the very life-blood of Christ. Then, with a sudden change in his imagery, Dante sees it as an oriflamme of light, in the midst of which is the Divine and yet human figure—

"— del suo colore stesso
Mi parve pinta della nostra effige."

The simile I have used is much less complex. By the Rose I mean the Likeness of Christ—by the scattered petals I mean the likenesses.

Imagery, however, is of no value in an argument except to make clear our thoughts about things unknown by comparing them with things known. The thoughts of men about one man during nineteen centuries—how they have changed! The thoughts of men about one who, to half the human race, is very God, while to the other half He is only a Galilean peasant—how they conflict! The conceptions of the great poets and painters of the Renascence, and the crude imaginings of the dark ages—how irreconcilable they seem to each other. What is there that can unite them? Imagery tends to differentiate, to separate. Truth only can bring together. There is in the Imperial Library at Vienna an illuminated manuscript of the ninth century. It represents Christ upon the

cross, but still living. At each side are the Sun and the Moon, looking at Christ, and preparing to cover their faces with their drapery. Need I add that in this picture there is no Likeness. Our Lord is represented in the beauty of youth. What had Truth to do with Art—or Art with Truth—in this case? Now, if no man had seen Christ at any time—if our Lord was a far-off, unknown, invisible, inaccessible being, of whom only our imagination could take cognisance, we might accept this representation, or Dante's vision, or Milton's description, as raising rather than degrading our conception of Him.

> "He in celestial panoply all arm'd,
> Ascended; at his right hand Victory
> Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow—
> His countenance too severe to be beheld,
> And full of wrath bent on his enemies."

But where truth is the first consideration, whether in Art or in Religion, the rudest record of the face of Christ drawn by the humblest painter who had really seen Him is worth more than the most imaginative picture of the Sun and Moon—or the sublimest conceits of Milton or Dante.

How direct are the first records we find in the catacombs—simple portraits, unconfused by symbol. How sincere are the mosaics of the basilicas, repeated without change during a thousand years.

How pathetic are the attempts of the early painters to represent the sufferings as well as the glory of the Redeemer. How splendid are the pictures of the masters of the Renascence—unfolding the life of Christ from the cradle to the cross. How enduring is this Likeness, that neither defect in the Studio nor defection in the Church, nor indifference of the World can alter or destroy. The secret of it lies in this—the Divine Comedy and Paradise Lost are great as works of Art, but the Likeness is true as a record.

One word more, with regard to the illustrations. Those from the pictures by the great masters of the Renascence and from the works of living painters present but little difficulty. The modern process of reproduction enables me to print with the text the very touch of the artist without the risk of errors inseparable from translations made by copyists or engravers. For the photographs thus reproduced I am chiefly indebted to Franz Hanfstaengl, whose renderings of the old masters are of unsurpassable beauty.

To secure trustworthy transcripts of the ancient relics was not so simple a matter. It requires skill of a very high order to reproduce works of this class without adding to, or taking from, the original effect. Moreover, some of these pictures are held to be in the highest degree

sacred, and have never been submitted to the process of photography. Others again are not to be seen except in connection with religious ceremonial. Many of the frescoes of the catacombs have nearly perished through the effects of damp, or of smoke from lamps and burning tapers: while the colossal figure in the church of SS. Cosma è Damiano bends over us from a curved surface of the apse, so that photography gives but an imperfect account of it. In all these cases I have had recourse to Mr. Heaphy's drawings in the British Museum—which I have been able to verify—and which I have found to be beyond comparison more accurate than any other transcripts I have ever seen.

Amongst these beautiful drawings of Thomas Heaphy there is one of singular interest as touching the argument for the authenticity of the Likeness. It is the delicate profile of a woman's face—the facsimile of an outline scored inside the grave of one of the earliest of the Christian martyrs. The pathetic story of Eutychia, and the bearing of the outline on the evidences, will be found in the chapter on actual portraiture. I refer to it here for the sake of bringing together in this record of the Likeness of the Master the names of these two, His servants, who lived in times so very far apart—the woman who, undismayed by fire or sword, was one of the first to wear the Likeness round her

neck as that of her friend as well as her Redeemer —the man who when the World, growing old, was beginning to treat the Likeness as a myth, set himself to the discovery of the evidences of its truth.

The catacombs of Rome are of vast, indeed of unmeasured, extent. The length of the corridors is estimated to be not less than seven hundred and fifty miles. All the ground under the city and part of the Campagna is hollow with them. Labourers are kept constantly at work in them, penetrating to their inmost recesses. When the grave of a martyr is discovered, with its monogram and palm, and lacrymatories, these things are removed for safety to the museums of the Vatican or the Lateran. After a gallery has been explored it is closed again, so that a few only are kept open for the inspection of strangers. It thus happens that drawings made long ago in these dark chambers have been copied from one book to another, until at last they are scarcely recognisable. The Callistine portrait has suffered in this way more cruelly than any other. Fifty years ago it existed as a faint shadow on the wall, and I give a facsimile of it as it appeared then. To-day I see woodcuts and outlines of it—or said to be of it, though the original has of course no outline—so hard and definite that they might be of beaten

brass, or of cast steel. Such illustrations are as fictitious as they are ugly: and it is not surprising that they fail to convince. But I believe that the very crux of the question lies in the fidelity and accuracy of the illustrations; and, for this reason "Rex Regum" contains no example of the Likeness that has not been drawn or reproduced directly from its original.

During the many years in which I have been engaged upon this study, I have, of course, read innumerable books which bear more or less directly upon the subject. Church histories, archæological treatises, descriptions of the catacombs and of early Christian symbolism, are full of references and allusions, interesting in themselves, but desultory, and leading to no certain conclusion. But nowhere do I find the question of the authenticity of the Likeness really dealt with as a question that must be met and answered. Writers on ecclesiastical or antiquarian subjects either assume the verisimilitude, or pass it by; or lay stress on some particular icon or engraved gem. But of the Likeness, the Likeness itself, apart from any individual example with a story attached to it—the Likeness as it may be gathered by a recension of many likenesses—they seem to know nothing. Some, indeed, have argued that the immediate followers of Christ could not—others, that they would not

have portrayed His features. I am content to show that they did; and that the Likeness they transmitted to us remains unchanged to this day. What I claim to have proved in "Rex Regum" stated categorically is this:

I. We possess a Likeness or representation of the face of Christ, which is universally recognised; so that if we see it painted on a wall or grouped with other faces, we know for whom it is intended. There are many versions of it, which we may admire or criticise, feeling that one painter has been happier than another in his rendering of it; but the Likeness which underlies them all, and which the painter intended to realise, we quite understand. It is this commonly received Likeness with which I am concerned in "Rex Regum."

II. This Likeness was not invented in our own time, for it already existed in the works of the great painters of the Renascence.

III. Nor was it invented by the painters of the Renascence, for it existed in the mosaics of the basilicas more than a thousand years before they adopted it.

IV. This same Likeness existed in the time of Constantine, when the Churches divided East and West. The Greek Church followed a traditional likeness existing in Byzantium—and be-

lieved by the Greeks to be authentic; the Latin Church followed a traditional likeness existing in Rome, believed by the Romans to be authentic; and the two likenesses, Greek and Latin, are the same.

V. This Likeness existed in, and was brought from the catacombs, by the Christians, when in the year 306 Constantine gave them religious freedom.

VI. This Likeness had been painted over the graves of the martyrs, in the catacombs, by men who lived in the immediate expectation of the coming of Christ, and who believed that they would recognise Him when he came.

VII. This Likeness existed in the catacombs not as a solitary example, but in almost every form of pictorial and plastic art.

VIII. This Likeness was first painted at a period when portraiture was a common practice among the people, and the main feature of the painter's and sculptor's art.

IX. This Likeness existed before the use of Christian symbolism had become general, side by side with actual portraits of the Apostles.

X. This Likeness existed before the text of the fourth Gospel was known to the Christian community in Rome.

XI. This Likeness existed before John, and Peter, and Paul were differentiated from their

brethren by a nimbus or aureole, which was at that time reserved for Christ alone.

XII. The grouping at this early date of the Likeness of Christ with actual portraits of Peter, and Paul, and John, implies the sanction of the Likeness by the Apostles.

These propositions, proved step by step, from paintings, mosaics, frescoes, cloth pictures, and engraved glass of the first century, form a chain of evidence that satisfies me of the authenticity of the Likeness. I make no claim to an impossible impartiality. The evidence not only satisfies me but I rejoice in it. I am glad that the Likeness of Christ is not the invention of an Italian painter, as the face of the Apollo Belvedere was the invention of a Greek sculptor. I am glad that the mosaics of the basilicas were wrought of an imperishable material, and by a method which did not admit of change in the Likeness for a thousand years. I am glad that the frescoes were sealed up in the darkness of the catacombs, so that they escaped the ravages of the barbarians in the dark ages. I am glad that the glass relics and cloth pictures have been brought from the graves—that they have not quite perished—that the Likeness upon them is still discernible. I am glad that the Church of Christ has not been deceived; if it had been deceived its testimony

on other matters would have been weakened. Last of all, I am still more glad that the Church has not been a deceiver—as I should be glad if a friend, to whom forgery had been imputed, were proved innocent. For, after all, the evidence of the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ is precisely the same evidence as that on which S. Paul bases his argument for the Resurrection of our Lord. Limit the use of it as you will; guard against the abuse of it if necessary: but the fact remains that the manhood of Christ was visible to men apart from the Godhead. And of this fact the Likeness is the record. There is no escape from this dilemma. If the Likeness of Christ is not authentic it is misleading, and the Church, in holding it before our eyes these nineteen centuries, has been inviting us to believe in, and to anticipate the second appearance of, a personality which we shall not only never see—but which never had any existence. I believe that the Likeness of Christ must stand or fall with Christianity.

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YESTERDAY

THE WHITE ROSE

Is the face we recognise as the face of Christ the real likeness of a real man? or is it only the fanciful creation of an artist's dream?

WHEN I entered my studio this morning I found a flower on my writing-table. It was a rose. I admired its beauty and then wondered. For it is December—and the time of roses is long past. If I look into the garden all is colourless and sad—the lawn is covered with frost, the landscape is a pale etching in black and white. What is this lovely creation that brings colour into the dull light of the decaying year? The children are busy in the house, decorating everything for Christmas. Is it a rose, then? or is it only one of those clever imitations in which the mind of a child takes delight?

Whatever the thing may be, it is certainly beautiful. It looks like a rose—but one's eyes

may easily be deceived by the cunning of the artist. It smells like a rose—but its perfume may have been imparted by the skill of science. I may be told that it was cut from the tree to-day —but that would be testimony, not proof.

See, I will make sure for myself: I will examine the delicate texture of the petals; I will push aside the corolla, and come to the stamen; I will observe how these grow out of the sheltering calyx; I will reach the living sap, and there shall be no longer any doubt. If the thing has the life of the rose, it is the rose itself.

Now in the Paradise of Art we have many beautiful flowers, and amongst them one more lovely than the rest. Whether or not it is the White Rose of the Paradise of God, it is at least the rose of our garden. Is it real; or is it a sham? Is the face we recognise as the face of Christ the real likeness of a real man? or is it only the fanciful creation of an artist's dream?

ANTECEDENT PROBABILITIES

Every a priori consideration leads to the conclusion that the Likeness is authentic.

IS the face we recognise as the face of Christ the real likeness of a real man? or is it only the fanciful creation of an artist's dream? It is to find a solution to this question that these pages are written.

It seems a strange question to ask in a Christian country; but it is surely a question to which we ought to be able to give a definite answer. And yet, how hesitating is the answer generally given! How many there are, living in this twentieth century, who can give no answer at all! It is not the length of time which has elapsed since the "pale Galilean" stood at Cæsar's bar that presents a difficulty. We know very well what Cæsar was like, for we have his image and superscription, on perhaps the very coins Christ rendered to him in tribute. Nineteen centuries are as nothing in

the record of Art. It is not that portraiture was unknown in the days of the Apostles; on the contrary, it was a marked characteristic of the age. At the very time when S. Paul and S. John were evangelising Asia Minor there were counted in one little island they visited, no larger than an English county, more than three thousand statues. It is not, again, that the followers of Christ were lukewarm or undemonstrative in their attachment to their Master; the accusation against them was that in their ardour they had turned the whole world upside down. It is not that the teaching of Christ lay slumbering in some hidden manuscript for generations, only to come to light after He had Himself passed away and His face had been forgotten. His teaching was by word of mouth, and the people heard Him gladly. The great multitude, listening to S. Peter on the day of Pentecost, were in the presence of men who had companied with the Lord all the time that He went in and out among them, and who had but just parted from Him as witnesses of His resurrection. It is not that His disciples failed to proceed immediately to engrave upon their chalices and pateræ, and to paint over the graves of the martyrs, the figure and face of One, doing the acts that Christ alone did, and bearing the attributes that Christ alone bears. It is not that these representations have been lost—they have

been preserved to us and we can see them to-day in the museums of the Vatican and the Lateran. It is not for any of these reasons that a doubt has been raised as to the authenticity of the Likeness we possess. All these things are but the simple facts of the case, uncontested, and known to everybody. Why then should there be any doubt at all? The antecedent probabilities are altogether on one side. If anything connected with the subject seems strange it is that the authenticity should be denied. If it is denied, the onus of proof should rest upon those who deny it.

But those who care to get at the truth on such a question as this, are not content to rest their faith on a dialectical dilemma. They seek not only to destroy an erroneous impression, but to create a true one, on solid grounds. The authenticity of the commonly received Likeness of Christ is not only to be believed, it is to be proved.

The timidity that is often felt in approaching the subject, and the prejudice against accepting the Likeness of Christ as authentic, arise from two sources;—first, the sense of the spirituality of the Divine Being; and second, the dread lest, if the Likeness be accepted as true, the recognition of its truth might lead to evil results in practice. But my subject is the Likeness of Christ as it

concerns the artist in his studio, and not as it concerns the theologian. It will be necessary indeed for me to refer to things and events which are held to be sacred, and I shall speak of them freely and with reverence. Without entering upon any religious controversy I take it that the doctrine of the perfect humanity of Christ is as vital to the Christian Faith as that of His divinity. Upon this subject Art has something to say, and in Art, as well as in Religion, the only safety lies in truth. As surely as a false conception on the part of the artist with regard to the Likeness would react unfavourably on Religion; so surely a false conception on the part of the religionist would react unfavourably upon Art. If the true Likeness has been hidden away or destroyed, the Church has been guilty of a *suppressio veri*; if a fictitious Likeness has been substituted for the true, the Church has been guilty of a *suggestio falsi*. There is no escape from this dilemma. Religion and Art are, indeed, in very close alliance, but neither can be served, or serve the other, with a lie.

THEOLOGICAL PERPLEXITIES

The only objections to the Likeness are of a theological character, and have been overruled by the universal practice of Christendom.

THE doubts which have been expressed as to the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ do not arise, therefore, from any antecedent improbabilities in History or in Art. Apart from religious sentiment, every *a priori* consideration leads to the belief that it is a simple historical record—drawn by men who had seen Christ for men who had seen Christ—in an age and amongst a people with whom the art of portraiture was a common practice—imperfect, it may be, from the point of view of the artists of to-day, yet fairly trustworthy, or it would not have been generally accepted at the time. Against this common-sense view of the question, however, is to be set an esoteric feeling that it cannot be true—that it is too good to be true. It is held that Christ,

being God—the very God who forbids the making of an image of God—cannot have given to the world an image of Himself. This argument, however, is based on incomplete premises, and contains a threefold error.

In the first place, it ignores the dual nature of Christ. The Likeness of Christ does not pretend to be in any sense a representation of His Divinity, but only of His Humanity. Of that it is the only visible record we possess. It is therefore a record not only of a great historic fact—it is a record of an essential article of our faith. It is a record that Pilate would have understood. Looking upon it he would have said—Yes, that is the prisoner I delivered to be crucified. The mother would have understood it, and have said—It is my son. The disciples did understand it, and placed it in the catacombs to remind them of the face of the Master. For, the knowledge of the face of Christ, was to the early Christians a necessary element in the evidences of Christianity. It was to the recognition of the human personality of Christ by a great multitude of witnesses, that S. Paul appealed in proof of the resurrection. It was in the belief that they would recognise Him that they daily expected his return—when every eye should see Him—even they also who had pierced Him. Whose eyes should their eyes look upon—flashing

with the lightning of heaven—but the very eyes which had looked with love and pity upon them? Whose hands should wield the sceptre of the kingdom but those which had been pierced? Without a clear perception of the Likeness of the Redeemer the testimony of S. Paul's many witnesses would have been vain—the visions of S. John's Apocalypse would have been unintelligible. For the companions of Christ to have so effaced His image from their minds as to think of Him only as the invisible God would have been—expressed in terms of humanity—unnatural; it would have been—expressed in terms of theology—the confounding of the Persons through fear of dividing the Substance.

Secondly, the argument takes no account of facts. As a fact, the direct teaching of the story of the Cross was—at least for the first millennium of the Church's history—committed to Art rather than to Letters. Since the invention of printing the written word has taken the place of pictorial representation. But forty generations had lived and died and the World had become Christian, before the sacred text was in the hands of the people, and the people were educated to read it for themselves. In the preface to the Revised Version it is stated that the earliest MS. of the Old Testament of which the age is certainly known, bears date A.D. 916; and that, of the New Testament,

nearly all the more ancient of the documentary authorities have become known only within the last two centuries; some of the most important of them, indeed, within the last few years. So that, if the nearness of the record to the event counts for anything, the frescoes of the catacombs have an advantage over the Bible, in that respect, of nearly a thousand years.

In the third place, the argument is irrelevant to the issue. If it means anything it means the total prohibition of all pictorial representations of our Lord. But if *all* are forbidden, it matters not whether they are true or false; the general interdiction would destroy true and false alike. There is, however, no Church in Christendom prepared to accept such a conclusion of the matter. The widest divergence of opinion and practice exists as to the use of Art in religious ceremonial; but to reject the Likeness of the Master absolutely —from our churches, our picture galleries, our museums, our libraries, our homes—this would go very near to a rejection of the Master Himself.

What then are the authorities which are usually cited against the use, and the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ? They are certain of the Fathers, of the second and third and fourth centuries. But it is obvious that if these objected, they were in a minority—that their objections

were overruled by the Church—and that the Church itself became the guardian and keeper of the Likeness. The first is Tertullian—"the fierce Tertullian," as Matthew Arnold calls him—who said: "*The sheep He saves, the goats He doth not save.*" Now, I am not concerned with the opinions of Tertullian as a divine; but I can see at once that they are in direct antagonism to the belief of the artists who, in their humble way, taught Christianity by means of Art in the catacombs. With them the favourite subject for illustration was Christ as the Good Shepherd. And I observe that it is not always the lamb—it is the kid of the goats—that is carried upon his shoulder. *The sheep can run by His side; it is the goat that must needs be saved.* Art is already in conflict with dogma. If Tertullian cannot bend it to his will, Tertullian will break it.

But then there is Origen. The Church had been taunted by an Epicurean philosopher on the ugliness of their God. The first pictures of Christ in the catacombs were indeed ugly—to Celsus—just as the teaching of S. Paul was foolishness to the Greek. But that is strong evidence that they were honest attempts by inefficient artists to represent one whom they had seen, and not ideal creations of their own imaginations. Celsus was right in describing them as ugly. The second-rate painter who can make a likeness, absolutely

startling in the vividness of its physical resemblance, will often fail to show the beauty of soul that underlies and transfigures the face of a man who has passed through the fires of suffering or tribulation. If Celsus could have seen the face of Christ painted by the masters of the Renascence, he might have withheld that taunt.

The time had come, however, when the Church, in defining her dogmas, had to face the subtleties of the Philosophers. Origen undertook to answer Celsus. He admits the ugliness of the outward form; but to those who have eyes to discern spiritual beauty, he thinks Christ will appear beautiful. The Likeness of Christ, then, so far from being unknown either to His disciples or to His adversaries, was a subject of discussion even in the second century. The pagan Philosophers, to whom physical beauty was an attribute of deity, derided it. Some of the Fathers were for destroying it altogether—but that, happily, was impossible—it was treasured in too many hands. Irenæus inveighed against the Gnostics for claiming to possess a likeness made by order of Pilate, but that only demonstrates at what a very early date the claim was made. Eusebius gently reproves the Empress Constantia for asking him to send her one of these likenesses. He does not say he has it not; nor does he question its existence. On the contrary, he speaks of it as a thing well known.

But he dissuades her from desiring it. "It would be a scandal," he adds, "if the heathen supposed that we took about with us the images of Him whom we adore." These are not the words of one to whom the real Likeness was unknown or inaccessible. On the contrary—they assume its existence, or there was no occasion to warn the Empress against its abuse. They were written at the time when the Church, emerging from the darkness of the catacombs, brought in her hand the treasured Likeness of the Redeemer. Fifty years later Epiphanius was not so gentle. Seeing one of these pictures of Christ painted upon a curtain in a church, he tore it down with his own hands, and ordered the verger to use it as the shroud of a pauper. Happy pauper, to be wrapped in the arms of Christ! Was ever warrior or ecclesiastic or king buried in such panoply as that? Epiphanius was counted one of the saintliest and most orthodox prelates of his age, and he tells us this story of himself, so we must believe it. It is hard, however, to reconcile the good Bishop's views with the ideas of the early painters in the catacombs. Something had happened. The simple portraits drawn by the contemporaries of Christ and the Apostles, and cherished by their immediate friends and followers, true as they were to nature and to fact, seemed for the moment to be irreconcilable with the subtle definitions being

formulated by the growing Church. The Church was surrounded by idolatrous practices. Whichever way the controversy as to the personal beauty of Christ might be settled, the Church could not suffer the Likeness to be treated as that of one more added to the many sons of the gods in the Pantheon of Rome. Theology was stronger than Art, and Art perished in the conflict. But not before it had left records which are unchangeable and imperishable.

Such is the array of the opinions of the Fathers as to the unlawfulness of preserving the Likeness of Christ. The thing may have been unlawful, but it was done. To say that it was not done because after it was done it was condemned, is illogical. To say that it was not done because it was forbidden, is to attribute to the artist a spirit of docility to which he has no claim. Such an argument is about as cogent as would be the contention, a hundred years hence, that paintings of the nude were not admitted to exhibitions of the Royal Academy in the nineteenth century because a distinguished Academician inveighed against them at a Church Congress! No artist would believe it, especially if he found some of the condemned pictures in the Diploma Gallery at Burlington House.

Now, the catacombs are, in effect, the Diploma

Gallery of the early Christian painters, where we may see what they were doing eighteen hundred years ago, and discover what were their ideas upon the subject which was the light of their life and the crowning glory of their Art. And the very first thing we note is that these artists, living in the time of Christ and His Apostles, were before all things painters of portraits.

In the Text-Book on Classic and Italian Painting, by Sir Edward Poynter and Mr. Percy Head, we read that "From the time of Augustus to the time of Diocletian was the period during which true Roman Art, such as it was, chiefly flourished. Portrait-painting engrossed the energies of the most capable artists. Portraits were indeed produced in great abundance; pictures or statues of eminent men were multiplied in public places and private collections; and portrait-painters in this epoch are mentioned for the first time as a distinct class of artists."

The scene is Rome. The persons concerned are the early converts to Christianity. The time is when Paul, abiding in his own house for two years, is teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him. He writes affectionately to Timothy, sending salutations from Ebulus, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. It is inconceivable that none of these should have had

any authentic knowledge of the face of Christ. It is still more inconceivable that they should have sanctioned the perpetuation of any representation of Him, knowing it to be untrue. The practice of portraiture was common amongst them. Christ had himself pointed to the likeness of Cæsar and based an argument upon it. Why should they have the likeness of Cæsar, and not that of the Master? The writings of the Apostles are absolutely silent upon the subject. Minute as are the instructions of Peter, and Paul, and James, and John, in their Epistles, as to the management of the Churches, there is not a word to be found in any one of them forbidding to the followers of Christ this natural desire to look upon His face.

In the presence of facts like these, theological difficulties disappear. They came into existence, indeed, only in the second or third century, bringing with them a long train of elaborate symbols, familiar enough to us now, but which would have been sorely perplexing to the first disciples. We shall see presently that Christian symbolism was practically unknown to Christian Art in the first ages of the Church.

What, then, were these pictures in the catacombs? They began with simple portraiture, by Roman artists, who were members of the little community: portraits of the brethren; portraits

of the Apostles; portraits of the Master. Is there anything strange in this? It goes on every day amongst ourselves. We see in our municipal galleries portraits of mayors and councillors who have served their city well. But the citizens would not accept these portraits if they were imaginary sketches made in London by artists who had never seen the men they desired to honour. We see sometimes round the neck of a woman a miniature of husband or father or mother or child. But it would not hang there unless it bore some resemblance to the dear orginal. And it is so with these portraits of Christ. They were sketches passed from hand to hand by the early Christians to remind each other of their Lord, or sent, as a newspaper is sent, to distant places to spread the light. They were pictures painted on the walls of the first places of assembly, to show to new disciples what the Master was like. They were ornaments worn round the neck, which recalled to their owners the face of their Friend and Redeemer. When the Apostles preached in the catacombs it must have been with these pictures looking down upon them. One seems to hear their very words. It is S. Paul who, with great boldness of speech, says, "We are not as Moses, who put a veil upon his face—which veil is done away in Christ;" and again, "We have the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

in the face of Jesus Christ." It is S. John who says: "That which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled—that declare we unto you—the Word of Life. No man hath seen God at any time; but the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we beheld His glory, full of grace and truth." I do not say that these words were spoken before these pictures, but men who both speak and write find very often that the same words fall from their lips as from their pen. I do not say that S. John pointed to these pictures as he spoke. As works of art they were but poor, and the beloved disciple may have been a connoisseur in painting. They would have been sufficient for his purpose, however, if his desire was to show that, without derogating from the majesty of the Divine Being or materialising the spirituality of our conception of the Father, we might yet approach Him as little children without fear through the humanity of the Redeemer.

THE LIKENESS DEFINED

By the "Likeness" of Christ I do not mean the "likenesses" nor any one of them in particular—but the verisimilitude, common to them all, which was not invented by any of the great masters, but was adopted by them from earlier records.

BY "the Likeness of Christ" I do not mean one particular likeness as against another; not the finest painting of Raphael as against the rude mosaics of the middle ages; nor the Latin form as against the Greek; and, particularly, I do not mean any individual gem, or other example which from its venerable antiquity or supposed origin may pretend to any special authority. What I mean by the Likeness of Christ is the Likeness common to all these; the Likeness that painters and sculptors in all ages have had before their mental vision when they attempted to portray His image; the Likeness that is known

throughout the world, sometimes more perfectly, sometimes less perfectly rendered, to which we all unconsciously appeal when we think of our Lord in any act of His ministry, apart from any particular picture; the Likeness that enables us to recognise in any group of figures the face that is intended to represent the face of Christ; the Likeness that the reader of this book had in his own mind before he turned its pages, and knew only that its title was "Rex Regum."

We see this Likeness everywhere. In the statuary that adorns our cathedrals, in the painted glass of our parish churches, in our museums and picture galleries, in the coloured prints that hang in our schools, telling the children the story of His life. And we note at once, that it is common to every form of Art, and to every country in the world. Art is the one universal language that has never been confounded, and on this subject it speaks the same word to every people. Even the evangelists who carry Christianity to savage tribes have no need to translate the Likeness of Christ, as they have to translate His words. It is, at all events to-day, a fixed type. No painter would dream of altering it, nor of claiming it as an invention of his own. It is not necessary to argue that this Likeness is not a product of our own time; the paintings of Correggio, of Raphael,

of Da Vinci, of Titian, of Michael Angelo, carry its history back at once as far as to the period of the Renascence.

And surely, if ever there was a period in the history of Art when this Likeness could have been invented, or evolved from the mind of the artist, it must have been the period of the Renascence. From Giotto in the thirteenth century to Titian in the sixteenth, we have a roll-call of painters that marks the very highest level of attainment in religious art that the world has known. To which, then, of all these painters are we indebted for this supreme deliverance? Is it to the grace of Raphael, or to the imagination of Michael Angelo, or to the tenderness of Correggio, or to the pious fervour of Fra Angelico, or to the collaboration of all these that we must look for its real authorship? Ah, no! The Likeness of Christ was no more invented by any of these men than it was invented by Mr. Watts, or Sir E. Burne-Jones, or Mr. Holman Hunt. They found it already existing. They recognised in the long-established model something greater, something truer, something more divine, than they could themselves create. The painters of the Renascence—men of marked independence of thought, men of strong national sentiment, Italians, Germans, Frenchmen, Spaniards—these men were

content, in this the chief action of their lives, to lay aside their invention, their independence their rivalry, their nationality, and to be at one in accepting humbly from other hands the Likeness of Christ.

Let us consider for a moment what this means. It is very easy for us, in the twentieth century, to forego any claim to the authorship of the Likeness, for behind us stand the great array of painters from whom we inherited it. But who were behind these men, from whom they could have inherited it? When you look back beyond the fifteenth, the fourteenth, the thirteenth centuries, what do you come to? You come to a time when it is idle to ask which painter invented it. There were simply no painters who could have invented it. For a thousand years Art had been dead. And yet there was, as we shall see, during that time, existing in all its splendour, this living, speaking, authoritative Likeness of Christ.

MOSAICS OF THE BASILICAS

The Likeness had received the sanction of the Church in the mosaics of the Basilicas for more than a thousand years before the period of the Renascence.

I REFER, of course, to the mosaics of the ancient basilicas of Rome. The drawings in this chapter are from four of these, and date from the fourth to the eighth century. To the painters of the Renascence they were familiar —as they had been familiar to the populace of Rome ever since Christianity had been established. In them all the Likeness is the same. What then is the position these mosaics take in the history of Art?

Sir Edward Poynter, in his book "Classic and Italian Painting," dates the extinction of ancient Art from the founding of the Eastern Empire at Constantinople, A.D. 330; and the awakening of Art in Italy from the time of Giunta of Pisa,

Guido of Siena, and Cimabue of Florence, in the thirteenth century. How then was the Likeness preserved and transmitted from century to century during that long, dark period? The mosaics of the basilicas are the connecting link. They date from the fourth century. As Italian art sank to its lowest level of decadence, Byzantine art grew in importance and supplanted it. By the seventh century the flood of northern barbarism had almost overwhelmed Italian civilisation, and the art of Christian Rome was practically extinct. The art which was kept alive in the more peaceful atmosphere of Constantinople was a product of Christianity engrafted in a dim reminiscence of the old Greek perfection. But Byzantine Art, at first not without qualities of beauty and grandeur, gradually became utterly rigid and lifeless under the hard conventionality that oppressed the artist. Direct appeal to nature was unknown; an artist selected his model, traced it, learned every detail by heart, and multiplied his mechanical copies wherever a representation of his subject was demanded. In all its most precious and subtle qualities each successive reproduction inevitably deteriorated. The same causes, however, which prevented improvement of the style saved it from extinction. An art for the most part mechanical was easily taught, and its plainly marked characteristics were not easily lost in passing from hand

PLATE II. MOSAICS OF THE BASILICAS

FROM THE BASILICA OF S. PAOLO FUORI LE MURA

PLATE III. MOSAICS OF THE BASILICAS

FROM THE BASILICA OF S. PUDENZIANA

to hand, or from country to country. From the monasteries of Constantinople, Thessalonica, and Mount Athos, Greek artists and teachers passed into all the provinces of Southern Europe.

That is the history of Art during the ten centuries which lie between the age of Constantine and the Renascence. It suffices to negative absolutely the supposition that the Likeness of Christ, as received by Giotto, and Raphael, and Titian, was the result of a gradual development, or evolution, or modification, during that period, of an uncertain type of doubtful origin. It was really a traditional repetition of a fixed type, which the Byzantine artists did not dare to alter, but only desired to follow, because from the first it was held by them to be authentic.

It was in the year A.D. 306 that Constantine succeeded to the throne, embraced Christianity, and adopted the Cross as the Imperial ensign. The Christians were made free. The Emperor built many churches, and undertook a journey to Jerusalem to discover the Holy Sepulchre. He erected a magnificent basilica at Bethlehem. At this time the Church was torn by the controversy between Arius and Athanasius. One triumphed for a time, and then the other. Subject to the caprice of Constantine one was always in banish-

ment. But the final victory rested with Athanasius. In A.D. 325 the Nicene Creed was adopted and the Arians were condemned. It was during this period that the Likeness as seen in the basilicas was finally accepted by the Universal Church as the Likeness of Christ. But it did not originate then. As we shall see, it came from still earlier records. It existed in frescoes by Roman artists; in enamels and mosaics imported from Byzantium; in pateræ of glass engraved with portraits of the Apostles; in pictures on linen which had been used as face-cloths for the dead; in a faint outline, drawn not by an artist at all, but evidently an attempt to delineate the features by one who was not an expert. These were the materials out of which the beautiful mosaics of the basilicas were designed—just as, in the Renascence, they and the mosaics of the basilicas together were the materials out of which Raphael and his contemporaries designed their wonderful creations. The Likeness had never changed, but now it became stereotyped. For the difference between mosaic-work and painting is that the one is mechanical, the other is the action of a free hand. There is no brush-work in the mosaic, no touch of a master's hand, no infirmity of a false eye or doubtful vision. The design being complete, the tesseræ can be counted as a child counts the stitches in a sampler; and though there may

PLATE IV. MOSAICS OF THE BASILICAS

FROM THE BASILICA OF S. PRASSEDE

PLATE V. MOSAICS OF THE BASILICAS

FROM THE BAPTISTERY OF CONSTANTINE

be good or bad workmanship, there is little room for the difference between good and bad Art so far as the worker is concerned. And the workers of these mosaics were copyists; they learned the design by rote, and executed the Likeness as they had learned it. Only there could be no advance, no reaching out towards the infinite, no attempt to express passion.

It is to this limitation that we are indebted for the preservation of the Likeness during the ten dark and silent centuries when Art scarcely so much as existed. A distinguished writer indeed, who is quite sure that the face of Christ was soon forgotten, even by the Disciples, suggests as an explanation, that perhaps a veil was drawn over our vision lest we should be tempted to worship an image. How very small such a theory seems, when we realise the fact that so far from any providential dispensation having obscured the Likeness, the artists of the world were kept for a thousand years, copying and copying, and forever copying it—as children are kept to their copybooks—until the features of the Divine Master became so wrought into the very texture of the minds of men that they can never be obliterated.

With the illustrations to this chapter must be included the magnificent figure which stands as

frontispiece to the book. It is from the church of SS. Cosma è Damiano, in the Forum, and dates from the sixth century. This colossal figure measures twelve feet in height. Sir E. Poynter counts the mosaics of this church as the finest examples of Byzantine art in Rome.

The mosaics from the basilicas of S. Prassede and S. Pudenziana are a little later in date: but they are drawn on the ancient lines, and are full of majesty and beauty.

The earliest of them all are those in the Baptistery of Constantine and the Basilica of S. Paolo fuori le Mura—both of which date from the fourth century.

I need scarcely say that the ravages of time have not left any of these mosaics absolutely unscathed; but the restoration of a mosaic is not to be compared with the restoration of a picture. Tesseræ may be displaced, and replaced, without materially affecting the design. There is no doubt that in looking at these figures of Christ, we see them as they were seen a thousand or fifteen hundred years ago by those who looked upon them for the first time. Serene, solemn, dignified, they possess some of the finest characteristics of Art. They are a priceless inheritance alike to the Christian and to the Artist. But they do not give us all that we ask from Art, or that Art can give, in the Likeness of Christ.

There are many things of great interest still to be noted in regard to the mosaics of the basilicas; but in this place, and indeed throughout the book, my desire is to deal with one point at a time, not burdening the argument with unnecessary details. Later, I shall show how far the great painters of the Renascence were content to follow the mosaics, and from what other sources they supplemented their knowledge of the Likeness of Christ. It suffices now to establish the fact that in the long sequence of historical records the mosaics of the basilicas carry the Likeness back without a shadow of change to the fourth century.

DIVISION OF THE CHURCHES

The Likeness existed before the division of the Churches in the time of Constantine, and was at that early date venerated as authentic.

WE have gone back, then, nearly sixteen hundred years, to find that the Likeness of Christ was then existing substantially as we know it to-day. Let us see whether we can go a step further.

There are certain landmarks in history which are of the utmost importance to observe, and the age of Constantine is one of them. Under his reign, ending A.D. 337, many and great changes occurred that did not fail to leave their mark both on Religion and on Art. At Rome the pagan temples were destroyed, or turned into basilicas for Christian worship. For the first time the new Faith was tolerated and encouraged by the State. Churches were built, and adorned with all the splendour that Art could lavish upon them. For

this purpose artists were brought from Byzantium, where also Constantine had destroyed the heathen temples, and established his seat of government. Thus there became two centres of authority in Christendom, a division which affected alike the formula of the Church and the vision of the Studio. In the Church this divided authority led to final separation. In the Studio it resulted in the prohibition by the Greek Church of the making of *images* of Christ, and in the sanction of His Likeness only in the form of *painting*. But both Churches still retained His Likeness, and in both Churches the Likeness is the same.

I say that in both Churches the Likeness is the same; but there is one slight difference between the Greek and the Latin pictures which shows not only that they were derived from independent copies,—and that the Churches kept tenaciously each to the copy it had received and held most sacred—but that the copies thus independently avouched were alike. In the pictures with which we are familiar, and which come to us through the Latin Church, the hair is always divided evenly over the forehead in the form of an arch. It is the same in the Greek pictures, with the slight difference that in Greek pictures there is always a slender lock of hair detached from the rest falling in the centre of the forehead. On the following

plate (VI) are two examples in which this difference in the arrangement of the hair upon the forehead is very clearly expressed.

The first is the work of a Roman artist—executed in Rome. It is a fresco, cut from the walls of the catacombs, and is now in the safe keeping of the Library of the Vatican.

The second is the work of a Greek artist—executed in Byzantium. It is an enamel, fine in workmanship, and rich in colour—purple and gold, crimson and blue. It was brought to Venice at the time of the decoration of the basilica, and is now preserved in the Treasury of S. Mark's.

Of these beautiful relics I shall have occasion to speak more particularly in later chapters. I place them here for the purpose of illustrating the unity of the Greek and the Latin types—a unity made all the more emphatic through the traditional distinction which has for seventeen centuries existed between them; a distinction always maintained—though perhaps most perceptible in the earlier examples. It proves beyond doubt that the Greek artists, working in Rome, found there a fixed type or model, which was held by the Roman Church to be authentic, and which they had to follow;—that the model which they brought with them was practically the same—the same, that is, with the exception of a lock of hair;—and that in executing their mosaics

ROMAN TYPE

GREEK TYPE

PLATE VI. DIVISION OF THE CHURCHES

in the Roman basilicas they followed the requirements of the Roman Church which employed them; while in the smaller examples of metal work and enamel actually wrought in Byzantium and imported to Rome, the distinctive characteristic of the Greek model was of course retained.

It follows then that in this early age of the Church there was in Rome a traditional Likeness, —known and recognised and held to be authentic; and that there was at the same time in Byzantium a traditional Likeness,—known and recognised and held to be authentic,—and that the two were indistinguishable from each other except by the slight accident of this lock of hair.

Now, it is obvious that a traditional Likeness must of necessity be a thing of slow growth. Much change is scarcely possible within the span of a single life. Not a few individuals only, but communities have to be convinced—and that for generations, before such a tradition can be established. Moreover, the question of the verisimilitude of the Likeness of Christ was not even then a modern question. It was discussed by Christian writers long before the beginning of the fourth century. Constantine could not have been without his ideas on the subject. Helena, his mother, built the church of S. Prassede to enshrine a portrait she rightly or wrongly believed to have been actually

drawn by an Apostle. When the workers in mosaic from Byzantium decorated the basilicas with the Likeness of Christ, they had to satisfy a people who believed devoutly in a Likeness they possessed, and with which they were familiar —a people who would have been no more content with a new invention to represent their Christ, than their forefathers would have been content to receive ideal heads from the Greek sculptors they employed, when they asked for portraits of their Cæsars. The traditional Likeness then existing in Rome may have been false or it may have been true; that we shall see presently. It is enough for my purpose now to show that there *was* a traditional Likeness, and that it is the same as that which crowns the triumphal arches of the basilicas to-day. The Church of Christ divides. East and West frame new creeds—devise new ceremonial observances—adopt new systems of government. But the Likeness of Christ remains unchanged. From whence was it derived?

FRESCOES OF THE CATACOMBS

The Likeness existed in the catacombs during the first three centuries, and was painted over the graves of the martyrs by men who anticipated the immediate coming of Christ, and believed that they would recognise His face.

THE Likeness of Christ remains unchanged —from whence was it derived? Clearly it was derived from the catacombs.

To the Christians, rejoicing for the first time in the sense of free citizenship and the protection of the State, the dark corridors of these underground sanctuaries were not half-forgotten memories of an age long past,—they were the record of the sufferings of yesterday. From the reign of Diocletian, their last persecutor, to the reign of Constantine, their first protector, was only three years. The pictures that covered the walls of the subterranean chapels and graves were familiar to their eyes; pictures, as I have said, of One doing

the acts that Christ alone did, and bearing the attributes that Christ alone bore,—pictures which to them at least represented their Lord. What were these pictures like?

I think that the most beautiful—as it is at the same time the divinest and the most human—of them all is the Callistine portrait, reproduced on Plate VII. The original is the size of life. I take it as the type of the Likeness in the catacombs. It is from the cemetery of S. Callisto, and appears to have been executed in colour; but the damp from the rock and the smoke from many tapers have done their work, and little is left but the beautiful outline of the divine face.

In this picture the Dean of Canterbury says that he can see nothing which could have suggested to artists of a later age their ideals of the Likeness of Christ—that he can perceive no common resemblance to it in the mosaics of the basilicas. Surprising as this statement seems it is explicable by the fact that the Dean has never himself seen the original. He admits that it has long ago practically perished, or at any rate has become indistinguishable. The hard, dry, almost brutally distinct woodcut that he gives us, and upon which he bases his comment, would inspire no one. The facsimile reproduced here, however, was made by Thomas Heaphy before the deadly

PLATE VII. FRESCOES OF THE CATACOMBS

FROM THE CATACOMB OF S. CALLISTO

effects of damp and smoke had destroyed this loveliest of all the remembrances of our Blessed Lord—which I believe to have been the work of a Roman artist, a portrait painter, who had himself seen Christ.

In laying so much stress upon the beauty and antiquity of this fresco, I must guard against the supposition that the authenticity of the commonly received Likeness depends upon any particular example. For, the whole argument rests on that word—"commonly." It is the commonly received Likeness now—it was commonly received by the painters of the Renascence—it was commonly received by the mosaic workers from the fourth to the twelfth century—it was commonly received in the time of Constantine—and I am now showing that it was commonly received when the Christians were driven to hide in the catacombs. The Callistine portrait is only one amongst many of the same kind which bear the common Likeness.

The profile on Plate VIII, for instance, cannot be anything else than a portrait. It is from the catacombs of SS. Achilli è Nereo, and bears the unmistakable marks of portraiture—not portraiture of the highest class, but of such a kind as a Roman artist could accomplish who had himself seen our Lord, and painted either from

memory or from an authentic model. It was painted in Rome, where Christ had never been, and where His followers were hunted down like dogs; but it was done by a Roman, for Romans who expected a portrait to be a likeness.

Two more of these frescoes shall suffice in this place. Their extreme similarity demonstrates their common origin. The one on Plate IX was transferred from the catacombs and is now in the Library of the Vatican. It is the central figure in a group of Christ and the Apostles, to which I refer in the chapter on "Conflicting Theories." In it the face of our Lord is full of distinction, as if it were a portrait, and is finished with the utmost care, while the faces of the disciples, with the exception of S. Peter and S. John, are extremely slight and characterless. Mr. Heaphy attributes this to the desire on the part of the artist to give special emphasis to the features of the Master; but I believe it to have been because the features of the Master and of the two Apostles alone were known to the painter, and that he sketched in the rest, without any authoritative guidance, from his own imagination. The subject of the picture is the Last Supper, and it is treated naturally—as a record—not ideally, as a symbol. In size it is only a little larger than the reproduction.

PLATE VIII. FRESCOES OF THE CATACOMBS

FROM THE CATACOMB OF SS. ACHILLI È NEREO

PLATE IX. FRESCOES FROM THE CATACOMBS

IN THE MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN

The last example (Plate VIII) is from the catacombs of SS. Achilli è Nereo. It is old amongst even these antiquities, for the wall upon which it is painted has been cut through—to the destruction of the picture of which it formed a part—in order to find a place of burial near to a martyr's grave. This could scarcely have been done within living memory of those who caused the picture to be painted; and yet the hands which destroyed the other figures were careful to leave untouched the face of Christ. Its great antiquity is evidenced also by the absence of all symbol. As in the Callistine portrait there is not even an aureole. The Likeness is most striking. Neither time nor circumstance seems to make any difference with the Likeness of Christ.

Before passing from this part of the question let me recall an argument I have already stated, and press it a little more closely. What was the purpose for which these likenesses of Christ were painted? They were painted over the graves of the martyrs, so that the face of the Redeemer might overshadow the place where they lay, until once more they should see Him as they had seen Him before they fell asleep.

That these men had a clear perception of the Likeness of Him whom they should see when they awaked, is evident by the words of S. Paul.

He appeals, in proof of the Resurrection of Christ, to the accumulative force of the testimony of many witnesses. It is S. Paul who says:

"He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:

After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.

After that, he was seen of James; then of all the Apostles.

And last of all he was seen of me also."

Now, it is obvious that the testimony of these many witnesses would be of value only in proportion to the certainty and clearness of their knowledge of the face of Christ.

But perhaps they had forgotten! And yet—Christ had told them to remember Him. Shall the Church say—We too have forgotten? There is only one step further which could be taken—and that would be to say, We never knew you.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

The Likeness existed during the first three centuries, not as a solitary example, but in countless numbers, and in almost every form of pictorial and plastic art.

THE evidences of the antiquity of the Likeness, which at first seemed scattered and far away, come crowding round us as we pursue the inquiry, until we find ourselves in the midst of a great cloud of witnesses. Let me now, in a few words, define and classify these witnesses not only in relation to the time for which they speak, but in regard also to the particular nature of their evidence. Our progress will not be delayed by making sure of every step we take.

The mosaics of the basilicas carry the Likeness back, through the dark ages, to the beginning of the fourth century, when the Christians were first emancipated from Pagan persecution, and made citizens of the empire. The building and decora-

tion of these basilicas were the first acts of a free Christian people. The mosaics of the basilicas were made, by the Church victorious, to show to the world what Christ was like.

The frescoes of the catacombs are the expression, before that time, of the early Christian mind upon the subject. They were painted, not to show the world what Christ was like, but in secret, by the Church suffering, to "comfort one another" with the assurance of the Lord's coming. Executed by Roman artists of various degrees of talent, untrammelled by the exigences of the workman's craft, either as to size or style—they allowed more play to the imagination and genius of the painter. And yet they show the same restraint, the same limit to two types—the real portrait, when they knew it and dared to paint it—the conventional youth, when they were ignorant of the true Likeness, or did not dare to paint it.

The small mosaics and metal ornaments of Byzantine workmanship give similar evidence. They come from a different source. Byzantium—at first the ally of Rome, then laid in ruins by Rome, and then rebuilt by Rome—had its own traditions of Art, inherited from Greece. It had also its traditions of the new Faith. As the art-school of the world it yielded to Rome these examples of its art-craft. And looking at them

PLATE X. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

GREEK ENAMEL FROM THE MUSEUM
OF THE VATICAN.

PLATE XI. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

MOSAIC. FROM THE MUSEUM
OF THE VATICAN

now we perceive that Roman and Greek were absolutely at one in their rendering of the Likeness of Christ.

The glass pictures give their special testimony. In the next chapter I shall examine them very carefully. It is known beyond doubt that the early Christians engraved on their sacramental vessels representations of Christ. It is known also that the use of glass for sacramental cups was forbidden in the second century. If, therefore, we find glass cups and ornaments in the graves of the martyrs in the most ancient sections of the catacombs engraved with representations of Christ, there is no room for doubt that they are the forbidden vessels, and that they are of a very early date indeed. We do find these cups and ornaments; we do find them engraved with these representations; and in some instances, though not always, they bear the Likeness of Christ, as we know it to-day.

But they are so small—these glass and metal ornaments. Can these minute things have been sufficient to determine the course of Art for succeeding centuries? Then the cloth pictures give their witness. The cloth pictures are life-size. It matters not whether the cloth pictures or the glass pictures are the more ancient; they were found together, they interpret each other; they agree with the frescoes. If the glass pictures are the

more ancient, the cloth pictures confirm their authenticity. If the cloth pictures are the more ancient, they also must date from the time of the contemporaries of Christ.

And now seven more witnesses claim to be examined.

The first (Plate X) is of Greek origin, and was discovered beneath the foundations of S. Maria in Trastavere. It is an example of the miniature work imported to Rome at the time of the building of the first basilicas. In construction it resembles a cloisonné enamel; the outlines are made of slender ridges of metal, and the interstices filled with a vitreous composition, exceedingly beautiful in colour. The drawing is about the size of the original, which is preserved in the Museum of the Vatican.

The second (Plate XI) is a miniature mosaic from the catacombs. It is said to have been the work of a pagan artist, and to have borne an inscription to the effect that the likeness was not satisfactory, having too much the appearance of a Greek philosopher. This also is in the Museum of the Vatican.

The third (Plate XII) is one of the likenesses attributed to S. Luke. It is painted on wood, in tempera; and is seen through a jewelled frame, which has the effect of a nimbus. The lock of

PLATE XII. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

LIKENESS ATTRIBUTED TO S. LUKE
IN THE MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN

PLATE XIII. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

LIKENESS ATTRIBUTED TO S. PETER
IN THE BASILICA OF S. PRASSEDE

hair falling on the forehead indicates that it is of eastern origin. It is preserved in the Museum of the Vatican.

The fourth—the beautiful drawing on Plate XIII—is the likeness attributed to S. Peter—to enshrine which S. Helena, the mother of Constantine, built the basilica of S. Prassede.

Before commenting upon this picture I must again guard against the supposition that the argument for the authenticity of the Likeness rests in the very least degree on legendary stories of the origin of any particular portrait. Every one of these stories may be swept away, and the argument will remain the same. It is to the pictures themselves that I appeal, and not to any traditions as to their origin. I say this, not because the story associated with this particular likeness is incredible, but because it is unnecessary.

The story is that when S. Peter was a visitor at the house of Pudens, a senator of Rome, the daughters of Pudens—SS. Prassede and Pudenziana—asked him what the Lord was like; and that the Apostle, with his stylus, drew on the handkerchief of one of the sisters the simple outline which we see in this picture.

But there is another legend of a very different character, the legend of Edessa. The drawing on Plate XIV is said to have been made by

S. Luke, and sent by our Lord Himself to Agbarus, the King of Edessa, to recover him of his sickness. The history of this picture goes back at least to the middle of the second century, when it was believed to be authentic.

The first of these stories is not only possibly, but probably, true. The second is not absolutely incredible. But there is a third to follow, which is of the common stuff of which legends are generally made. It is the legend of S. Veronica. The story is so well known that I will dismiss it in a few words. It is said that when on the way to Calvary our Lord fell beneath the weight of the cross, a woman—S. Veronica—moved with pity, gave Him her handkerchief, or herself wiped the sweat from His face; and that thus the imprint of His features was left miraculously and forever on the piece of linen.

Again a piece of linen, the size of a handkerchief; again the resemblance of Christ, but not painted by an artist; again the early date as an essential element in the narrative. What does it all mean? The answer is not far to seek, and it explains every difficulty of the case.

There is no real mystery about these ancient relics. The Veronica likenesses, of which there are many, are simply face-cloths which had been laid upon the dead. These face-cloths were sometimes marked with the sacred anagram, or with

PLATE XIV. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

LIKENESS ATTRIBUTED TO S. LUKE IN THE CHURCH OF S. BARTOLOMEO, GENOA

PLATE XV. THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES

THE VERONICAS OF S. SILVESTRO AND S. PETER'S

some emblem of the resurrection. But there can be no doubt that in many instances the same desire to identify themselves with Christ, and to express their hope and expectation of His second coming, that led men to paint His face over these graves, led them also to cover with it the faces of their beloved. The likeness attributed to S. Peter, and the one said to have been sent to Agbarus, may have been drawings made on linen for this purpose, but never actually used. They show no stains of the grave. But the two which appear on Plate XV from S. Silvestro, and S. Peter's, Rome—have been darkened in the valley of the shadow of death. The darkness of a Veronica is really the imprint of a face—the dead face on which it was laid; the likeness discerned through the imprint is the drawing originally made on the cloth, and it is the Likeness of Christ.

Again I reserve all subsidiary questions to a later chapter. In an illustrative note on "Angelo and the Veronica" I shall show how these frail relics from the catacombs affected modern art—how they were recognised and followed by the great painters of the Renascence. For the moment I am concerned only with the main issue—the continuity of the chain of evidence which reaches back to the times of the Apostles. These seven

witnesses do not stand alone—they are part of the "cloud of witnesses" who say the same thing. Their evidence should be examined and cross-examined carefully. There are still more to follow; but these suffice to show at the very least that the Likeness which the Christians of the fourth century delighted to emblazon on their walls was not a new invention, but had been the consolation of still earlier Christians during the long dark period of their persecution. The pale, beautiful face which had overshadowed the graves of the martyrs, at last looked down on multitudes of worshippers in the stately basilicas; but it was the same face, and it had been hallowed to them in their adversity as it never could be in their hour of triumph. As Christ had been in the grave for three days before His resurrection, so this verisimilitude of Him had been in the catacombs for three centuries before it arose to live for ever.

ACTUAL PORTRAITURE

The Likeness existed before the use of Christian Symbolism—side by side with actual portraiture of the Apostles and their contemporaries.

THIS brings us to a very early period indeed of the history of the Likeness of Christ. We are within the catacombs, and we find it there. But how came it there? shall we lose it now in the darkness? or may we hope to trace it through the darkness till we once more reach the light? If we can do this we shall have reached the light that fell on Christ Himself.

From first to last in this argument I eliminate everything of the nature of myth, or legend, or tradition. I rely only upon evidence that I can verify with my eyes or accept from accredited historians. For instance, I feel sure that one of the first desires of the early converts at Rome must have been to know what our Lord was like. But I base no argument on this until I can show that they had that desire—that it was an innocent

desire—and that the means for its fulfilment lay ready to their hands. All this I have shown; and in the Illustrative Notes on "S. Paul and his Friends," "Art in the time of Christ," and "Forgetting Christ," I shall deal with the subject very fully, and from many points of view. Briefly stated the argument is that the desire for the Likeness is evident by the fact that they proceeded at once to decorate the chambers where they met for worship with pictures of Christ—the lawfulness of the desire by the total absence of prohibitory, or even cautionary, reference to it in the writings of the Apostles; while the common custom of portraiture which prevailed at the time demonstrates that the utmost facilities were at their disposal.

But that is not all. It is quite certain that whether these disciples of Christ cared to preserve the Likeness of their Master or not, they cared to preserve their own. Here are two portraits which prove it beyond question. The one is of S. Paul, the other is of his friend, Linus. They are facsimiles of engraved glass pateræ from the catacombs, now in the Museum of the Vatican. I have selected them from many examples of direct portraiture of men whose faces were familiar to the Romans of the first century, and whose names are mentioned in the Epistles. They show that portraiture (as distinct from symbolic

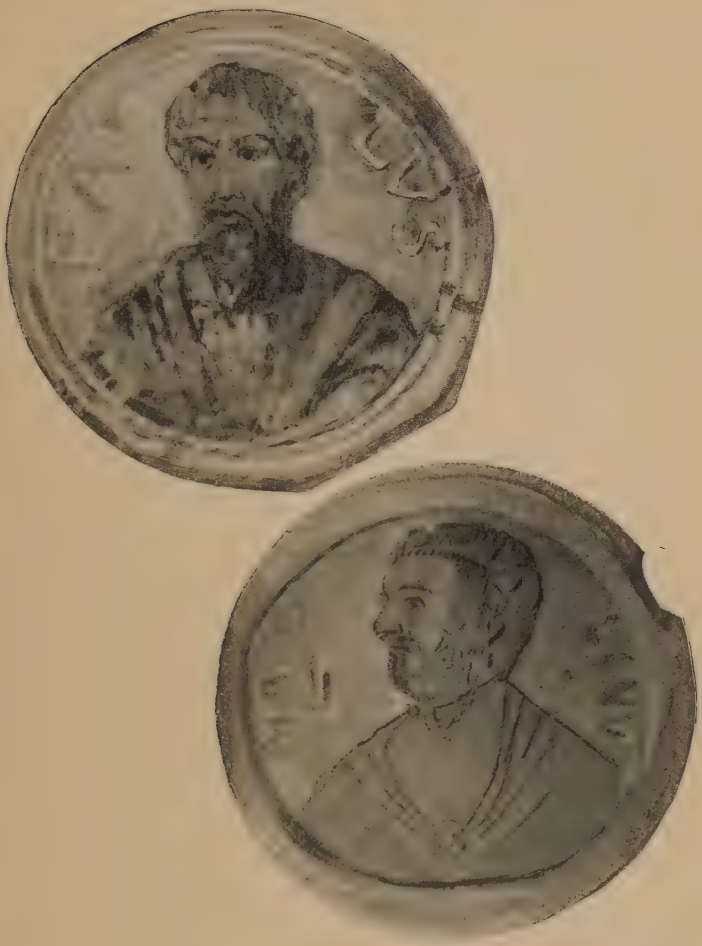

PLATE XVI. ACTUAL PORTRAITURE

FROM THE MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN

or imaginative art) was not only lawful to, but was practised by the immediate followers of the Apostles.

Here then we find a people, accustomed to commemorate their heroes by portraiture, banded together in the worship of a new hero—a hero greater than any they had known before, and endeared to them by a stronger tie, that of love —one known personally to many of them, and of whose Likeness any of them could have obtained authentic information ; we see this people, driven to the catacombs, proceed at once to cover the walls, to engrave upon their sacramental vessels, to bury with their martyrs, pictures representing the life and actions and attributes of their hero. It is too much to ask us to believe that the Likeness they painted on their walls, engraved upon their chalices, and buried with their dead, was a sham.

I purpose in this chapter to pursue a little further this question of the actual portraiture of Christ. One of the most curious of the many objections raised to the authenticity of the Likeness is the assumption that in the earliest days of Christianity the belief in the Divine nature of Christ was so universal, so absolute, so overwhelming, that men did not dare to represent Him in His human form, but limited themselves

to emblems or symbols. All this is formulated by Dr. Farrar, in a series of definitions of the stages in which he supposes that the Likeness was evolved. The Dean says that—

i. In the earliest stages of Christianity Christ was only shadowed forth symbolically, or *Ideographically.*

ii. He was next represented indirectly, and even by Pagan analogies.

iii. He was then set forth *Historico-symbolically* by Old Testament types.

iv. Then *Allusively*—by reference to New Testament parables.

v. Then *Ideally*—with no attempt to indicate His absolute semblance.

vi. It was only after several centuries that artists began to paint Him directly.

vii. By the eighth century—but not heartily or unanimously till then—the Church had learned to accept the views of S. John of Damascus—to paint Him, in colours as well as in speech, in pictures as well as in books.

How far all this is from the truth we have already seen in the mosaics of the basilicas, which date from the fourth century, and in the many pictures from the catacombs of still greater antiquity. But the theory is almost grotesque in its absolute inversion of the facts. It is based on two erroneous assumptions.

The first assumption is that Christian Art was so dominated by the Jewish prejudice against any representation of the Divine Being that the artist was afraid to draw the Likeness of the Master. This is altogether over-estimating the influence of Judaism. The Art of the early Christians was Roman Art, and the artists were Roman artists, practising in their own country—the very last race of men to be affected by sympathy with Jewish tradition. If the influence of Jewish tradition ever reached the artists of Rome, it could only have been after long years of reconciliation to the thought that He whom they called Lord had come of the despised people. It is again too much to ask us to believe that upon the first preaching of Christianity a whole nation, accustomed from time immemorial to erect statues in honour of their gods or heroes, should hesitate to paint the face of a new Teacher, whether they believed Him to be God or man.

The second assumption is equally untenable. The full recognition of the Divinity of Christ by the people was not achieved in a moment. Rome was not convinced in a day, any more than was the Church itself. Gradually, as the teaching of the Apostles sank into the hearts of men, the sense of the awful presence of God with man, prevailed, and the free use of the Likeness of Christ began to be considered perilous. Then

came the substitution of symbolism. Dr. Zerffi, in his "Manual of the Historical Development of Art," says :—"the homely simplicity of the early Christians is distinctly to be traced in the *absence of all symbolic decoration during the first two centuries.* Gradually they passed through the phase of geometrical ornamentation—triangles, circles, crosses, squares. Then came the adoption of emblems taken from the vegetable and animal world, until at last they revelled in symbolical eagles, crows, peacocks, doves, gridirons, pitchers, beehives, oxen, pigs, bulls, geese, violins, fishes—as the attributes of our Lord and of the saints." Sir Edward Poynter, in his chapter on Early Christian Painting, says, of the Callistine frescoes, that, "painted as they were by men whose religion was a secret, a thing apart from their daily life, and whose ordinary employment was probably to illustrate in Roman houses the popular and conventional subjects of Roman art, *these pictures naturally display little or nothing of the peculiarities of ideal and symbolism which distinguish the later Christian Art.*" Schlegel says, in his Third Letter, that "theories founded on some imperfectly understood philosophical idea have been blindly adopted and dogmatically enforced. A very different and more successful result might have been obtained had people rather attempted to discover what was true by the aid of historical

and traditional records. It appears highly natural that amongst the earliest subjects of representation should have been that which no effort of imagination could ever successfully achieve—the thorn-crowned head of the Redeemer. *The legend of S. Veronica attests the antiquity of that representation.*" St. John Tyrwhitt, in his "Christian Art and Symbolism," says: "The great Christian symbol—the Cross—faces us *as soon as the catacombs are closed. No cross with the least pretence to antiquity occurs in the catacombs at all.* It may have been used in private before the time of Constantine; it probably could not have been used in public before he abolished the shameful punishment of crucifixion." Dr. Farrar himself admits that *the earliest known reference to Christian symbolism is to be found in the writings of S. Clement*—not Clemens Romanus, the companion of S. Paul, but Clement of Alexandria—*who died in the third century.* But in the middle of the second century Tertullian had thundered against the Likeness, so that symbolism followed portraiture rather than preceded it. S. Clement advises that emblems should be used. For a signet ring he suggests the device of a dove, or of a fish, or of a ship, or of a man fishing—to remind one of an Apostle. S. Clement's advice simply points to the perils of persecution—from which he himself fled. The denunciations of

Tertullian, and the fury of Severus had taken effect, so that when S. Clement wrote, the use of symbol was becoming general, to the displacement of the simple portraiture which had been so dear to the first generation of converts.

How natural; how inevitable. The first generation of Christians had passed away. There was no one living who had seen Christ, or any of the Apostles. Now, any man who possesses portraits of a long line of ancestors knows well, however proud he may be of them, that the picture dearest to him of all, is that of the father or mother upon whose face he has looked. To the Christians of the second and third centuries the portraits of Christ were not of quite the same interest as they had been to the contemporaries of Christ and the Apostles, and when the question of the use of the Likeness came to be discussed they were ready to accept emblems, in the place of direct representations of a face they had never seen. I wish I knew what Hermogenes thought of it. Hermogenes was a Christian painter of the second century, and was denounced by Tertullian not only for practising the pagan art of painting, but also for painting for pagan patrons. Perhaps, as an artist, he clung to the Likeness, when the theologian wanted him to paint symbols. A little later Irenæus and Eusebius, as we have

already seen, would have extirpated the Likeness of Christ from the Church of Christ if they could have had their way. And what would they have left to us? Symbolism. Instead of the face which we can love, and which they feared we should come to adore, they would have given us a Greek anagram, or a fish, or an eagle, or a lamb, things which all the world over have been adored, but which, whatever else we might be able to do with them, we could never love. Is symbolism then so safe an alternative to the true Likeness? It begins with these things; we do not know where it ends. The pagans were also symbolists, and chose to represent Christ by emblems. They also discarded His Likeness, and represented Him not by His face, but by the ass on which He rode.

The successive stages therefore of the use of the Likeness of Christ are—

i. First, the simple portraiture common to the time of the Apostles, without symbol; the Likeness being that of a face well known to many witnesses, who needed no marks of identification.

ii. Then the Likeness, together with some symbol, such as the sacred anagram, or an aureole, either as marking some Divine attribute, or as indicating to those who should come after, that it was the face of the Master.

iii. Then the ascendancy of symbolism. The face which none of them had seen seemed too far off to hold men's hearts. It was a dangerous possession too in times of persecution. Moreover it was regarded with suspicion. Suspicion lest the insistence on the humanity of Christ might suggest questions as to His Divinity; or lest it should be accounted the image of God, and so lead to idolatrous practices.

iv. Finally, all these misgivings of timid souls having been removed or over-ruled—the Church made free under Constantine—the controversies respecting the Divine and human nature of Christ settled by General Council—this Likeness, which never had been lost, but only obscured by symbolism, was brought forth from the catacombs and emblazoned on the triumphal arches of the basilicas as a declaration in the sight of all men, not alone that it was the glory of Christian Art, but that it was to be cherished for ever as one of the essential elements in the evidences of the Christian religion.

I feel that the name of Tertullian has figured too largely in these pages. But the opponents of the Likeness have so placed him as a lion in the path, that the mere rattling of his chains seems enough to frighten some men from looking back further than the middle of the second century.

Let us now venture to go clean past him, and see what really lies beyond. We know that he wrote against Art, and against Hermogenes the artist in particular; we know that he condemned the custom of engraving representations of Christ on the sacramental vessels. He may have been right or wrong in his views, but one thing is certain. The record of his condemnation of these things is at least a demonstration that they were then in existence. Let us now examine some of the likenesses of our Lord which Tertullian has certified to be of this very early date.

The glass annulet on Plate XIX is from one of them. It represents Christ bringing again the Fruit of the Tree of Life. It was made as an ornament to be worn round the neck of a woman, and was taken from her grave. Her name was Eutychia. Of her—more perishable than glass—only a handful of dust remains. Poor little Eutychia. She did not go to sleep like Eutychus, when S. Paul preached too long a sermon. She lived to die for Christ, perhaps in the arena, and was buried with her favourite ornament upon her bosom, the only thing to comfort her during the long hours of waiting in the darkness. I have no doubt she liked the little glory round His head, and that emanated even from His body. Perhaps she cried over it, for women will cry, as

Michael Angelo says, over things they love very much. Poor Eutychia, did I say? Ah! not so. On her grave are written these words: "Eutychia —happiest of women."

One would like to see Eutychia. It seems certain that she cared to know what Christ was like, and to think that she would be quick to recognise Him at His appearing—an event she did not regard as so far off as we know it to be now. Perhaps He too knows what she was like, and will recognise her when the time comes. But for ourselves—Eutychia lived so very long ago—how can we expect ever to know her face? And yet—so strong was the habit, or custom, of portraiture amongst these early Christians, so facile were they in the art, that while the mortar was still fresh in the grave where Eutychia was laid—some hand—unknown to us—perhaps the hand that wrote the inscription—scored a profile on the wall that can be nothing else than Eutychia's portrait.

How many surmises there are in all this! yes—but the point is that they are all perfectly consistent with the known facts of the case. This likeness, found on the bosom of this woman may date from any year between the first preaching of Christianity in Rome, and the middle of the second

century. It may have been given to her by Hermogenes the painter, or by the sleepy Eutychus, whose eyes Paul opened when they were thought to have been closed for ever—or by Paul himself. It is of the same material, and engraved in the same style as the portraits of that Apostle to the Gentiles. When we stand on holy ground, there is no telling what may happen. However that may be, the three medallions on Plate XVII are demonstrably of the time of the Apostles. They are of glass, engraved with lines filled in with gold. I have examined them very carefully in the Museum of the Vatican, where, through the courtesy of the late Cardinal Manning, I received great and special facilities for pursuing this study. Observe, in the first of them, the individuality of the heads. They are obviously portraits. But when were they done? Obviously again, while the men were living. They are not traditional imaginings of four saints. Three, indeed, are now called saints, but these must have been drawn before they were so called, while Damas (Who was Damas?) was one of them, and they were not differentiated by an aureole. No doubt John and Peter and Paul had preached or prayed in these dark chambers, and Damas may have taken the chair. This medallion is perhaps the record of their visit, and Damas stands with the other three, not knowing that while his name will be forgotten

theirs will live for ever. But now turn to the second and third of these medallions, and you will see a strange thing. Again the figures are portraits—S. Peter and S. Paul, Timothy and Justus. The four are treated alike. Over their heads are no aureoles; but One is crowning them with the Crown of Life—or of martyrdom, it may be, for Paul was beheaded, Peter was crucified, and Timothy was stoned to death. The point is, that these likenesses were executed before the three were differentiated from the fourth as Saints, when the aureole was for Christ alone. See, then, what follows! At that early date the One who awards the Crown of Life, or gives the martyr's palm, bears the Likeness we know to-day. And the artist, who thinks it necessary to write the names of Paul and Peter and Timothy and Justus over their portraits, does not think it necessary to write the name of Christ. Why? Because His face was so well known that no Christian amongst them could mistake it.

But how small are these tiny engravings! Surely they are a slender foundation upon which to build so mighty a structure as that of the Likeness of Christ through nineteen centuries. Now, it is in this smallness, this slightness, that the force of this part of the argument lies. It is not supposed that the masters of the Renascence—to

PLATE XVII. ACTUAL PORTRAITURE

SACRAMENTAL PATERÆ. FROM THE MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN

say nothing of the mosaic workers of the middle ages—rested on an outline so slight, an idea so falteringly expressed. They did not take the Likeness from these tiny heads; it was these that indicated to them which was the true Likeness. It was these that identified the larger pictures—painted on the walls, or wrought in mosaic, or faintly sketched on cloth—as real portraiture, and not exercises of the imagination. Imaginary likenesses are quite out of place while the original, or those who knew him well, are living. These minute outlines were made, not to show to strangers what Christ was like, but to be recognised by those who knew what Christ was like. That is a very different thing. The men who accepted these portraits of their friends—Peter and John, and Damas and Paul—would not have accepted a mock Likeness for the face of the Giver of the Crowns. It is not the crowning simply—the crowning by anybody—that they asked of the artist; it is the crowning by Christ.

Looking back for a moment on the course which the argument has taken, we perceive that it is not Archæology alone, nor Theology alone nor Art, nor History, that can determine the question of the authenticity of the Likeness. Still less is it to be determined by the impulses of æsthetic or religious emotion. The archæologist

may find it incapable of demonstration; but he can formulate no proof against it. The theologian may remain unconvinced; but he cannot meet it with a forbidding word by Christ or the Apostles. The historian can tell us how the Fathers disputed as to whether it was beautiful or ugly; that proves its existence, but not its verisimilitude. The artist may figure to himself an unknown Christ; he can offer it however only as the creation of his own imagination. But the evidence on which I rely is circumstantial and complete. These fragile outlines are records, wrought in gold, by the contemporaries and immediate followers of the Apostles. They take their place amongst the many witnesses, and make the accumulated evidence irresistible. If some of the witnesses speak only at second-hand —these speak directly. If others are tainted by association with superstitious legends—these are associated only with Peter and Paul and John and the brethren. It is true that even amongst the brethren there were some whose eyes could not be altogether trusted. The two who journeyed to Emmaus did not recognise Christ even while He talked with them. What would have become of S. Paul's argument for the Resurrection if his appeal had been only to these two? And yet they were disciples. How gently S. Luke deals with them—he says their eyes were holden

—ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν ἐκρατοῦντο. But even these men saw at last; and though the recognition came too late for them to make amends to Christ, they rose the same hour, tired as they were from their journey, and returned to Jerusalem, a good seven miles' walk, that they might tell the eleven what they had seen. Can we believe that they ever again forgot what Christ was like?

But, after all, the argument does not rest upon numbers—if one petal can be found of the true substance, it proves the existence of the flower. And yet men are so slow of heart to believe things concerning Him. They tear the corolla to pieces, not knowing. Their hands are wet with the living sap, and they think it is only from dew that fell an hour ago. They pass through the catacombs, and observe paintings on the walls, by Roman artists, in the Roman style, of a Roman youth, a Fair Shepherd, an Orpheus, a David; and they say—These are imaginary pictures of Christ—these are not likenesses of Christ—we have no likeness of Christ—we have no likeness but that of Cæsar!

THE CONVENTIONAL CHRIST

The Likeness is not one amongst many—but is the only representation of our Lord that claims to be authentic, or has the characteristics of true portraiture: all others are confessedly imaginary.

I HAVE shown then, beyond cavil, that the Likeness of Christ with which the contemporaries of the Apostles adorned the catacombs, was the same that survived through the second and third centuries, and was in the fourth century transferred to the mosaics of the basilicas. But in the catacombs are found many representations of Christ that do not bear this Likeness in any marked degree; and many more that do not bear it at all. That, however, does not weaken the argument. It is the inevitable result of the pictures having been executed by different hands—some of them unskilled, some of them uninformed—and at intervals of time extending through

many generations. The differences are for the most part such differences as a thousand children in our schools might make if they attempted each to draw a portrait of the King. They no more prove that we have not the Likeness of Christ, than such exercises would prove that we have no likeness of the King upon our coins.

But these variations in the representations of Christ found in the catacombs not only fail to negative my argument; upon closer examination they yield it very strong support. For had the artists, whose work they are, wrought each from his own imagination or ideal of what the face of Christ should be, there would have been almost as many variations as there were artists. But there are practically only two. There is the Likeness as we know it, of which I have been speaking throughout, and there is the representation of Christ as a Roman youth, bearing no marks that an artist can recognise as showing any attempt at portraiture. Under one or other of these two types all the pictures of the catacombs may be classified. There is no third type. The beardless lad—as shown on Plate XVIII—or the solemn face we know so well—with drooping eyebrows, long masses of waving hair, and parted beard. If we have the Likeness of Christ at all it must be one of these.

How then came the second type into the catacombs? That is one of the most interesting episodes in the history of the Likeness. To the early Christians it was not always safe to declare their faith openly by bearing upon their persons the portrait of their Master; nor indeed would it have been prudent for the artists they employed to have identified themselves with the new sect by painting or engraving the Likeness of the Christ. The natural alternative was symbol. That which they could not venture to paint under the direct Likeness they painted in a form familiar to the Romans, artists and people alike. "Paint me now"—they would say—"Paint me now the leopards and the lions we saw yesterday in the arena—and in the midst of them one playing upon a harp." And thus Christ subduing the hearts of men, is typified in the form of Orpheus attracting the wild beasts with his lyre. Christ, whose word runneth very swiftly, is figured by David with a stone in his sling. Christ, as the good shepherd, is represented by a youth carrying a lamb across a stream. These were symbols—safe yet intelligible. But the *essential condition of them was that they should not bear the Likeness.* And so a type was adopted—a simple Roman type which Roman artists, taught in the great pagan schools, understood and followed. But side by side with it existed always the other type—the true type—

ROMAN

GREEK

DEBASED

PLATE XVIII. THE CONVENTIONAL CHRIST

the face at which Celsus scoffed as being too ugly for that of a god—which fewer hands could reproduce—but which the disciples loved, and in which artists to-day, as well as in the days of Constantine or the days of Raphael, recognise the characteristics of true portraiture.

The conventional type, however, is not necessarily without beauty: but its beauty is of a different kind. It is a beauty that, the nearer it approaches to perfection, the further it leads us from the knowledge of the real Likeness of Christ. It is not a likeness at all: it is an idea. Amongst the loveliest of these conventional Christs, is one to be found in the Vatican. It is a fragment of church embroidery, of Byzantine workmanship, said to be the vestment in which Charlemagne was crowned. This however has been questioned: but for my purpose it matters nothing whether it dates from the eighth or the twelfth century. I give a drawing of it on Plate XVIII for the sake of showing the conventional type at its best.

But Christ in the catacombs is not always represented as one figure in a group, or as doing some action that will identify His person. We find amongst the oldest of the frescoes paintings of a face only—framed in a circle—like that on Plate VII. These were called *imagines clypeatae*, from *imago* a likeness, and *clypeus* a round shield.

Such paintings—telling no story—could have no purpose except portraiture. Now, the Likeness of Christ does sometimes appear in this form, but the face of the youthful shepherd never.

We have, then, two representations, but not two Likenesses of Christ. The one is a conventional rendering of a common Roman type, the other is the record left to us by the contemporaries of the Apostles. The loose reasoning which confounds the two, or assumes that one grew out of the other, is not a new thing. It existed in the centuries that followed the building and decoration of the basilicas, and it took the form of an attempt (i) to fuse the two into one; and (ii) to show a congenital resemblance between Christ and His Mother. S. Augustine, however, had already pointed out that while we possessed countless representations of the face of Christ, the face of the Virgin Mother was altogether beyond our knowledge. But in the beautiful young shepherd Art found the material for the assimilation of the two. The well-known head on Plate XVIII, from the crypt of S. Cecilia, is the debased result. It has neither the strength of the man, nor the beauty of the woman, nor the innocence of the child. But it is a curious and interesting attempt to follow both types. There is no approach in it to anything like a third ideal. The folding of the hair

across the forehead, and its falling in waves towards the shoulders, the drooping of the eyebrows, the width of the head about the level of the eyes, the long slender nose—these are taken from the true Likeness. The oval shape of the face is taken directly from the conventional figures to which I have referred.

It will be seen presently that this conventional form which originated when the early Christians were hiding from persecution in the catacombs has never been absolutely abandoned. It was repeated during the long period of Byzantine Art which followed, although the mosaic workers were decorating the basilicas with the true Likeness. Michael Angelo returned to it even while Raphael and Correggio, and Titian, and Da Vinci were looking straight into the Master's face: and in our own day at least one great painter clings to it still. Of these I shall give account in their proper order. But the conventional type neither is, nor does it for a moment pretend to be, the Likeness of our Blessed Lord.

A GOLDEN LINK

The Likeness existed before the text of the fourth Gospel was known to the Christian community in Rome.

IT is impossible to crowd into the brief space of this volume all the evidence that bears upon the subject and tells the same story. There is, however, one more point too interesting to be omitted. To find pictures and relics in the catacombs is not enough to prove that they date from the first age of the Church. Some portions of the catacombs are of course much earlier than other portions. It is true that, speaking generally, the graves of the martyrs are the graves of those who suffered through the long period of the ten persecutions, beginning almost immediately after S. Paul's last visit to Rome, and ending about the close of the third century. But after the establishment of the Christian Faith the Christians still resorted to the catacombs, and though some of the

galleries were closed in the fourth century, there are many relics to be found of a date later even than that. These, however, may be dismissed from the argument. From the time when the Likeness of Christ was emblazoned on the walls of the basilicas, in the sight of all men, it is a matter of course that those who desired to decorate or hallow their graves with the Likeness would take it from the acknowledged renderings sanctioned by the Church. Our concern is only with the graves of the martyrs of the first three centuries. These again must have been of various dates, ranging through the first, second, and third centuries. Are there any indications by which we can determine which are the earlier and which the later? I think there are.

To this point the sequence of my argument has been direct and unbroken. Now, however, for the sake of those who have never explored the catacombs for themselves, I must turn aside for a moment to describe very briefly the place where these relics of the early Church were found.

The catacombs are long underground passages, just high enough to walk through without stooping—just wide enough for one person at a time to pass. They are so vast in extent that an army of more than a million soldiers might be hidden in them. Now, indeed, they are for the most part

closed with walls of masonry, only a very limited portion remaining accessible to visitors—and that portion despoiled of its ancient treasures. I do not say this as a reproach to the authorities: these priceless relics can be better cared for and more safely guarded in the museums of the Vatican and the Lateran than if they had been left *in situ*. Moreover, from time to time unexplored galleries are opened, with all the possibilities and hope of new discoveries.

As soon as our eyes have recovered from the almost blinding light of an Italian sun, we perceive that at each side are recesses, cut out of the rock horizontally, and arranged one over another very much like the berths of a ship. These narrow shelves are the graves of the martyrs. From time to time, as you thread the labyrinth of passages, you come upon larger chambers, where the first Christians gathered for worship.

It was here that the Church found refuge during the terrible persecutions of the Roman emperors. It was here that the faithful listened to the preaching of the Apostles. It was here that in the last extremity they made their place of burial.

The walls are covered with frescoes such as I have already described, and with innumerable inscriptions and quaint symbols. As we pass through the endless corridors, and our eyes grow accustomed to the darkness, we seem to be moving

with a dim procession of many figures. A dim procession—*aere cavo clypeus*, as Virgil calls them—shadowy forms like those on Plates VII and VIII, not things *excudere aera spirantia*, beaten brass to the life. A dim procession but not voiceless, for the inscriptions read like echoes of the old hymns of faith and hope and love still lingering round the forsaken shrines.

But it is within the graves that the relics of glass, of which I have said so much, are found. To understand them we must consider the mode of burial practised by these early Christians.

On one of the narrow shelves cut in the rock would be laid a surface of fresh mortar, and upon this the body—in some cases the torn fragments of the body—would be placed. The impress of the limbs and even the texture of the garments upon the mortar are still visible, though the bodies have long since crumbled to dust. Then, before the grave was closed, it was usual to place near the head the sacramental cup that had been used in life. These cups—or pateræ—were made of glass, and bore upon them, engraved beneath the base of the cup, emblems and figures relating to the Christian Faith. Placed thus, on the fresh mortar, they would sink a little by their own weight, with the result that while, during the long ages that followed, the fragile glass, corroded by

the atmosphere, fell into disintegrated filaments—flakes of dust that one can blow away with a breath—the base of the cup remained hermetically sealed, and was thus preserved to tell its beautiful story. And what is the story these pateræ have to tell? If you take one of them and carefully strip away the mortar that still clings to it, you will find in gold—the Likeness of Christ.

The relics we have already examined are of this description. From the portraiture of the Apostles which we find upon them we infer that they are of the age of the contemporaries of the Apostles. From the association of the Likeness of Christ with this actual portraiture we infer also that the Likeness of Christ was portraiture.

But there is yet one more of these glass pictures to be considered, and it points to the same conclusion by an entirely independent chain of reasoning. The inference in this case arises not from the deliberate intention of the artist, but from an accident or fault.

The figure on Plate XIX represents our Lord turning the water into wine. This, the first miracle, appears to have been a favourite subject for illustration by the early Church. It is repeated many times, with little variation. Our Lord stands—as in the glass relic before us—holding in his hand a rod, with which he touches the water-pots. There

PLATE XIX. RELICS FROM THE CATACOMBS

ORNAMENTS WORN ROUND THE NECK.
FROM THE MUSEUM OF THE VATICAN

is, however, one variation of a remarkable character. In the earlier examples there are always seven water-pots, in the later examples there are only six. What is the meaning of this change? Seven is of course the mystic number, and if the original narrative had said "water-pots" without specifying how many, it is natural that, in an age of symbolism that number should have been chosen by the artists. But why did they change the seven into six?

Now here is a strange thing. This miracle of the changing of water into wine is mentioned in only one of the four Gospels, that of S. John—the very Gospel declared by modern criticism to be of a late date. Does our chain of evidence snap here? I think not: let us look a little further.

We turn from this picture to others, found in the same catacomb, and what do we see? We see Christ and the woman of Samaria, Christ as the Good Shepherd, Christ as the True Vine, Christ raising Lazarus; and we note that all these subjects are named only in S. John's Gospel.

But here is a thing more strange. We see no representation of the Nativity, or of the Transfiguration, or of the Ascension, and we note that these events are described only in the Synoptic Gospels and not in the writings of S. John. Now S. John had preached in these catacombs long before he wrote his Apocalypse in Patmos, or his

Gospel at Ephesus. It is inconceivable that he should not have narrated to the brethren these reminiscences of the Master: and in a verbal narrative it would matter little whether they remembered him to have said seven or six. The inferences are irresistible.

1st. That these paintings, thus limited to the writings of S. John, were designed by men who had a special regard for his teaching; otherwise it is inexplicable that the choice of subject should be limited to his narrative, to the exclusion of the most transcendent incidents of our Lord's life.

2nd. That this particular picture was designed before the manuscript of S. John's Gospel was received in Rome; otherwise it is inexplicable that the symbolism of seven should have overridden the sacred text.

But this example again is one that beyond cavil bears the Likeness of Christ.

THE CHAIN COMPLETE

The evidence of Art, of History, and of Archæology, unite to show that the Likeness came within the knowledge and sanction of the Apostles as the real Likeness of Christ.

THE chain of my argument is now complete. Let me once more examine it, link by link, to see if any are broken, or need strengthening. None are absolutely missing, but it will be perceived that they are not all of equal strength. Some are corroded by time—the frescoes of the catacombs have very nearly perished. Some have from the first never been thoroughly welded—the Fathers have left us disputations, which prove its existence, but not its verisimilitude. Some are alloyed with base metal—the evidence of the Veronicas has been tainted with superstition. But, happily, there are many witnesses, and where one is silent or speaks doubtfully, another fills the hiatus. After all, the simile of a chain, like every

other simile, is imperfect. For a chain, if a link be broken, will part. The argument in this case is more like a cable of many strands. If a strand is cut the cable is no doubt weakened; but its strength is not altogether lost.

It will be seen that the evidence is of three kinds—historical, archæological, and artistic—and that these give united and independent testimony to the authenticity of the Likeness.

In History we possess an unbroken record of its existence from the first century. The practice of portraiture by the early Christians; the objections to its use immediately after—not before—the close of the Apostolic age; the dates of the ten persecutions; the treasuring of pictures believed to be authentic; these things lead us to question whether it is possible that of all the leaders of men in that era, Christ was the only one whose likeness nobody cared to preserve.

Then, Archæology finds this Likeness in the mosaics of the basilicas. Many of these have been defaced and restored, but the restoration of a mosaic is not like the restoration of a painting, and enough remains to assure us that nothing material has been added to the Likeness even by the hand of Titian or Raphael. But we search further, and we come upon the relics of the catacombs—the frescoes, the glass vessels, the metal ornaments, and the cloth pictures—and we find there, under

all these forms and conditions of Art, the same Likeness of our Lord.

In how many instances, and in what degree of perfection, are questions not so much for the historian or the archæologist as for the artist to determine. But Art is not one of the exact sciences. In Art there is room for wide differences of opinion. Artists may err in their judgment. I know all this, and yet I know also that if in a question like this the artist is at fault, there is no higher appeal. But the artist does not speak wildly or without knowledge when he estimates the drift, and characteristics, and limitations, and development, and decay of different schools—or the different results arising from the free handling of the brush or from the cramped manipulation of the tesseræ of a mosaic.

And the first thing noted by the artist is the astonishing unity which prevails throughout the world with regard to the acceptance of this Likeness—astonishing, that is, to those who do not believe in its authenticity. This of course calls for some explanation; and explanations have accordingly been offered. One popular writer says that Art has been misled by perverted religious teaching, and that the attempt to wander hand in hand with conventional orthodoxy has but helped to lead it further astray. He sees in the Christs of the Spanish school the taint of pestilence

from the horrible blight of the Inquisition; while on the other hand he perceives in the Christs of the painters of Germany only the expression of gentleness and suffering. This is a very superficial view of the question. The minute realism of the German and Flemish schools lends itself more readily to the expression of physical pain than does the decorative method of the painters of Spain and Italy. Moreover, the mood of a painter is controlled rather by his individual temperament than by his nationality. Murillo, the Spaniard, was by no means an ascetic—his Madonnas and Child Christs are amongst the sweetest and most tender of religious pictures—whereas some of the most ghastly and agonising representations of the sufferings of our Lord have come from the courageous pencils of the German reformers. There is in the British Museum a drawing by Albert Dürer of the face of Christ so terrific in its realisation of the anguish of thirst endured by Christ upon the cross, that the memory of it haunts me even as I look at the serene mosaics of the basilicas or the beautiful frescoes of the catacombs. But even if the statement were true it would explain only the diversity—which needs no explanation—leaving the tremendous fact of the unity as great a mystery as ever. It is said again, by the editor of an ecclesiastical text-book, that the Likeness of Christ grew up

gradually during the middle ages, beginning with the poor rudimentary suggestions of it in the catacombs, and developing to its full splendour in the hands of the Byzantine mosaic workers from the sixth to the ninth century. That theory I have disproved: but if it were true it would not account for the unity. For if the Likeness came by process of evolution, it would have developed differently among different peoples. Look at the fresco on Plate VII, and the mosaic on Plate II, and compare them with the example on Plate XVIII. The fresco is of the first or second century—the mosaic is of the fourth—the debased likeness is of the ninth. But the artist has no difficulty in determining that the change is not the result of growth or development. It is the result of deterioration and decay.

It would scarcely be possible to anticipate every misunderstanding. There is, however, one false conception current that should be noted. In some minds the meaning of the words *likeness* and *portrait* is confused. There may be a likeness in a picture that is not a portrait; there may be a portrait in which there is no likeness. It is said sometimes, "Oh! but I thought the hair should be longer, or darker, or lighter," as the case may be. But the likeness of a man or woman is something apart from the colour or method of arranging

the hair. The long waving hair, so characteristic of the pictures of our Lord, does not affect the question of the Likeness, except that repetition of it from generation to generation through nineteen hundred years is evidence of the faithfulness with which the Likeness has been transmitted. Again, it is said, "The Likeness I prefer is more sad, or more stern, or more gentle." But *likeness* is not to be confounded with *expression*. The expression that a great painter will give to the Likeness of Christ is quite apart from the Likeness itself. In this, Raphael, and Titian, and Correggio will differ, as they differ in the excellences of their genius. I suppose the expression on our Lord's face must have changed from time to time. Yet the Likeness would have remained unchanged.

Of the bearing of this great subject on Art, I shall speak in the following chapters, in which I shall trace the history of the Likeness through the Renascence to our own day. But I shall deal with it solely as it affects the Studio, without entering upon any theological controversy, or urging the acceptance of any particular religious views. Every artist who cares for Christ, as well as every Christian who cares for Art, is interested in the question of the authenticity of the Likeness. If it is authentic—if it is indeed the verisimilitude of the Redeemer—it is for Religion rather than

for Art to determine what place it should take in the economy of the Christian life. But truth must reign supreme alike in the Church and in the Studio.

Now as the borderland between History and Religion is myth, so the borderland between Art and Religion is legend. My purpose is to dispel both myth and legend by making the landmarks clearer and more certain. The miraculous Virgins that wink, and the black Christs that are said to have fallen from heaven do not add to our knowledge. Let them not, however, by exciting derision or prejudice, rob us of the knowledge we do possess. Truth is always wronged by being wrapped in mystery. This is a plain question, and ought to receive a plain answer. Is the Likeness of Christ the evolution of an ecclesiastical myth? or is it the beautiful dream of some great painter? I have shown that it is the real Likeness of a real man.

TO-DAY

THE TWO RECORDS

We possess two Records concerning Christ—the record of His Words in Literature, and the record of His Likeness in Art.

A THOUSAND years have passed since the time when Constantine, bringing the Likeness of Christ from the darkness of the catacombs, emblazoned it upon the walls of the basilicas in the sight of all men. The Likeness has remained without change, but Art has entered upon a new life.

Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

How interesting this must be to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It sets forth the first duty of a citizen so very clearly. Yes, but it is interesting to the artist also. It is the great arbitrament between the claims of his Art and of his Religion. When he has paid his share of the taxation of his country, he has still tribute to render to God and to man. Worship, obedience, affection, are due with discriminating regard to laws Divine and human. Our Lord's words teach us to distinguish between these laws. As the Son of God—He seems to say—as the Son of God I claim all that the Father hath given me—your souls, your obedience, your love, your worship, for I and my

Father are one. As the Son of Man I claim all that I have inherited from my mother—your hearts, your affection, your loyalty, your brotherhood: for I am meek and lowly in heart. Remember me. I do not say remember me as the Judge who will separate the sheep from the goats —there is another word for that—I say, remember me as the Shepherd of the flock, who carried the lambs in his bosom. But how can we remember unless we have a record?

Now, as the record of the Words of Christ comes to us through Literature, so the record of the Likeness of Christ comes to us through Art. Imperfect records they are, both of them, and liable to be abused. An ambiguous word, a faulty manuscript, a printer's error, may corrupt the meaning of a whole chapter. And in like manner, for Art is only another form of language, a questionable touch, the use of a defective material, an accident of workmanship, may mutilate or disfigure a likeness. But happily our knowledge of the sacred text does not rest on any one manuscript. There are various readings, from which, by patient labour and critical acumen a trustworthy recension may be made. And it is the same with the Likeness. It is no solitary portrait on which we have to rely. The strength of the evidence of its authenticity lies in the multiplicity

of examples, and the variety of forms in which we find them. Frescoes the size of life, minute engravings on glass, cloth pictures from the graves of the martyrs, mosaics, bas-reliefs—every form of Art practised in the time of the Apostles—yields contributory evidence. There are, of course, legendary pictures, as there are spurious gospels and epistles: but these things, whether in Literature or Art, are met in the same way, by criticism, and do not take away from the truth of things proved to be true.

It will be seen that in all this I am not drawing any comparison between the relative value of the two records. The record of the Words of Christ may transcend the record of the Likeness of Christ, as the Divine nature transcends the human; and yet they may both be true. The question of the importance of the record is quite apart from the question of its veracity. The authenticity of the Likeness claimed by the artist is the same as that claimed by the scholar for the *text* of the Gospels. But it is supported by evidence more direct, and of greater antiquity. The words of our Lord were spoken in Aramaic, the popular language of Palestine, but they are recorded by the Evangelists in Greek: so that before they were set down in writing at all, they had undergone one process of translation. Thus not only are the

actual words absolutely lost to us, but the literary necessity of the reconstruction of every sentence in another tongue, must have intervened between the sayings of Christ and the pen of the writer. The equivalent in Art would be that four Likenesses should have been painted from memory, a matter of no difficulty to the practised portrait painter, that the original paintings should have been lost, and that we should possess copies. In their initiation, therefore, the two records stand upon the same ground. But with regard to the Words of Christ, how many times has this process of translation, or copying, taken place before they reached us. The most ancient Greek texts known are the Codex Sinaiticus, and the Codex Vaticanus, both of the fourth century, and written in uncial characters, that is, without punctuation or division of words, and in part without accents or breathings. Do we, therefore, fling them away as not authentic? Surely, if the recension of the sacred text is a tribute from the scholar to Christ the Son of God, the recension of the Likeness is a tribute from the artist to Christ the Son of Man.

Either of these records may be abused by Superstition, but safety lies in the truth of the record.

WHAT the Words of Christ are, therefore, to Literature—the Likeness of Christ is to Art. It is a birthright and an inheritance that the artist will not sell for any mess of pottage.

It is, however, just when Art in assuming the beautiful garments of religious symbol appears in its supremest beauty that it incurs also its extremest risk.

So long as Art is true to its legitimate purpose, the setting forth of the glory of the Creation, so long its association with religion cannot but purify, and strengthen, and elevate,—purging it from its contact with evil, invigorating it with the passion of human life, lifting it to the contemplation of the life Divine.

But the moment that Art ceases to reflect, and assumes to partake of the Divine nature—it dies.

Arrayed in royal robes it may be—but it dies. Sitting upon a throne it may be—but it dies. It dies as Herod died, even while the people are yet shouting that it is a god.

How indeed could it be otherwise? It is impossible at the same time to recognise the true glory of a work of Art, and to attribute to it a supernatural origin. That which is a representation cannot be also the thing itself. The antique statues which we so highly prize as works of Art were made to adorn the temples of the gods; but they were not worshipped. It is not in the study of High Art that men become idolaters. It was just when Greek Art culminated in these beautiful statues that Socrates was leading his disciples to think of the higher life and of the spiritual nature of the Divine Being. It was just when Raphael and Correggio and Da Vinci were filling the world once more with beauty that the Reformation burst forth in Europe. And it is just in those countries where there are *living* Schools of Art that Art is least used for superstitious purposes.

In the days of Phidias, as in the days of Angelo, men knew very well whence their statues came—from the studios of their artists. Art was already in its decadence when the images became seized with the strange habit of falling down from heaven.

Whether this decadence led to, or was the result of a superstitious use of Art, is another question; but it is of vital moment to the lovers of Art to know that superstition and High Art cannot exist together. Either the art must become so debased that there shall be no glory in it for the artist to inherit, or the people must become so brutish that they cannot recognise the hand of a genius. The image of the great goddess Diana of the Ephesians, for whom Demetrius made silver shrines, is so monstrously deformed that it cannot be reckoned as a work of art at all. The Black Virgin at Chartres, to which pilgrimages are made from all parts of the world, stripped of its jewelled vestments and its crown, is but a shapeless doll. These are the images which men worship: but works of High Art, never! These are the statues which fell down from heaven! Did they? If so, it is a matter for grave wonder that the sculptors up there were not better skilled in their craft. There is no artist among men who would acknowledge them as his work. They must have been cast out because they were so ugly. But is there in the wide world an example of a masterpiece in Art to which any supernatural virtue is ascribed? I know of none. And yet it is not that Art cannot, or ought not, to touch such themes. There are pictures of the Blessed Mother so pure, so tender, so exalted, that we cannot worship them—we

cannot, because they are true—true, that is, to our highest conception of womanhood. These paintings work no miracles; to them no prayer is made; in their honour no sacred rites are performed; we can only look upon them, and thank God that such men as Raphael and Angelo have lived to paint them.

But as Art cannot suffer from its contact with true Religion, so Religion cannot be blasphemed by true Art. And yet what strange distinctions have been drawn, by the scholastic theology which too often usurps the place of real religion, with regard to the use of Art for religious purposes. For example, the Latin Church sanctions the use of images and pictures; while the Greek Church condemns the image as an idol, but carries the picture in solemn procession. This is a nice distinction—and to simple minds seems very much like the splitting of straws. But let us look at home. We flatter ourselves that we have cleansed the temple of God because we have cast out both statuary and painting. But is it so? Are these the only forms in which Art can give a false presentment of the Divine Being? I think not. A danger lies before us also, I will not say greater than that against which we rightly guard, but a danger all the more real because against it we seem to have no guard at all.

I refer to the freedom with which the Poet does that which is forbidden to the Painter or the Sculptor. The Sculptor is not to bring his crucifix into our churches, although it is a simple record of a fact. The Painter is not to show us the Master walking upon the waters, though the waves be painted from the Lake of Galilee, and the face from the real likeness of the Master Himself. But the Poet—yes! He may picture for us a Being clothed with what he conceives to be the attributes of God, and casting it into verse—not a picture, not an image, that were idolatry—but into the form of verse, he may then present it before us for our actual worship. It is not alone in ivory, or silver, or stone, or wood, that images can be made. Shakespeare created King Lear, yet he was not a sculptor. It is not alone on canvas that untrue or incomplete representations of the Deity can be given, but in hymns, and prayers, and sermons, and creeds; in any and every form of Art, of which words are the manifestation. This is a danger, real, and close upon us. How much has Art to answer for in this, the commonest method of making an image? How many are there who think that they have cast away God, while they have really never seen Him, but seen only some strange presentment of Him through the distorted imagination of an enthusiast. It is said to have been a favourite expression of Strauss in com-

mencing a demonstration, "I will now proceed to construct God." The words appal us with their apparent brutality. Yet what are they but the repetition in the lecture-room of that which our great poets and divines have always done unchallenged? Is it for an Alexandrian bishop only to define the Deity?—or for an English Puritan to portray the "Eternal Father?" But were these words used only in derision, or had they a deeper meaning, namely, that anything which man can construct cannot by any possibility be divine? If the Professor had been content to hold before our eyes some Pasht from India, or some Bambino from Italy, his satire would, for Englishmen at least, have fallen pointless. Its sting for us lies altogether in this, that in his "construction" he used only—words.

Do I speak too strongly? Again I think not. Turn for a moment to the Hymnals commonly used in our churches, and what do we find?

> "There is an eye that never sleeps
> Beneath the wing of night;
> There is an ear that never shuts
> When sink the beams of light."

And thus God is "constructed" for us,—as a bird—a colossal bird—but a bird without the loveliest characteristic of the feathered tribe, the

trustful hiding of its head under its wing—a bird that always keeps its eye open. But read a little further:

> "There is an arm that never tires,
> When human strength gives way:"

—an arm is a strange development for a bird;—but that is not Art—that is called Poetry! It approaches no nearer, however, to a true conception of God than does Dante's conceit of an ever-changing, luminous subsistence of three circles, threefold in colour, but of one dimension.

It may be that some minds are so constituted that they can form no conception of the nature of the Divine Being except through a definite description of something material—something which they have seen with their eyes. To such minds the ascription to God of human passions may be more misleading than the ascription to Him of the human form. For, after all, while the verbal presentment which we sanction is inevitably false, because it is an anthropomorphic rendering of that which is not human but supernatural and infinite, the material presentment which we condemn is true as far as it goes. True, because it deals with the real likeness of a real man. We have seen already that our knowledge of the face of Christ is not the result of the genius of any of the great painters of the Renascence;—that for

more than a thousand years before these men pondered over it—while the Heathen were still raging, and the Kings taking counsel together—this Likeness was known and treasured ;—that the early Christians were not less careful to preserve the Likeness of the Master than were the Romans to keep the likeness of the Cæsar to whom He rendered tribute. In taking our nature upon Him, Christ gave us the right to look upon His face.

And yet the commandment stands. Let us see to it that we do not transgress. He who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, will not be worshipped through an image, even though it be an image of Himself.

And yet the right remains. Let us see to it, lest, in refusing to look upon His face, we deny Him as the Son of Man.

But the higher the subject-matter may be with which Art has to deal, the greater is the peril of any deviation from the truth. Perhaps in giving us this likeness of Himself, while still forbidding us to worship Him through any image, it is the will of Christ that we should take Him to live with us, not upon our altars, but within our homes. It is quite certain that if any idolatrous use has been made of this likeness, such use has always been associated with the false representation

rather than with the true. It is not the "Ecce Homo" in our National Gallery, or the beautiful Face which sanctifies our dwelling-house, that stands between us and God. They only win from us, and for us, a few happy moments of love and reverence towards One who is too often absent from our thoughts. It is around the crucifix that the superstitious uses of Art are crowded. And observe, in the former case the representation is true; in the latter it is historically and physically false. Physically false, because it is impossible for the pierced feet and tender hands to sustain, with calm outstretched arms, the weight that would drag down the body in intolerable anguish. Historically false, because Christ did not mock us, as Shelley suggests, by the appearance only of suffering. In vain do we look with wistful eyes towards Palestine; a few miles of surf breaking upon our English coast is all that we can see. In vain do we turn to the files of our oldest journals; like a chain snapped close to our hands they fail us here. There were no correspondents of the press to send sketches of the events that were then transpiring beyond the blue waters of the Mediterranean. There were no statues erected to His honour by an admiring public; there were no coins bearing His superscription; only His friends, as we have seen, cared to preserve the Likeness of the Master. And, without exception

these representations of Christ are representations not of His humiliation, but of His glory. It is Christ turning the water into wine: it is Christ blessing the bread: it is Christ raising Lazarus. But Christ upon the cross—not that, anything but that. We have no true picture of our Lord in His last agony. The earliest known representation of the Crucifixion, except indeed an intentional caricature, is of the sixth century, so that for half a millennium at least the followers of Christ were content to leave to pagan hands the pictorial record of His sufferings. That which they had seen with their eyes, which they had looked upon, and their hands had handled, they never tired of declaring unto men; and they declared it not by word of mouth only, but by the pencil also, in every form of tender remembrance of the dear face they had loved. So, upon their sacramental vessels they engraved the Likeness. So, when they lay down for their last sleep they placed it on their breast. So, when the darkness fell upon the bloody arena they would gather the torn fragments of His martyrs and carry them to some quiet resting-place in the catacombs where His face, painted upon the wall, might overshadow them. And later, when they could serve Him without fear, and build churches to His praise, in fresco and mosaic they still declared that which they had seen. And yet there lay beyond the reach of Art the unknown

quantity which was from the beginning. The Manhood they could paint, but the Godhead, never! Amongst the early Christians the image of Christ was never used in religious ceremonial. He whom they adored was not God apart from Man, nor Man apart from God, but One—Christ. And this, Art could never give. So that when men wearied of the simplicity of a purely spiritual worship, and turned to the splendour of ritual for aid in their devotions, they demanded too much of Art. Art knew Christ only as the Son of Man, but the image they desired to place upon their altars must be the Son of God. What could the painter do? The very purpose of his work, and the spirit of reverence with which he would approach it, would impel him to give to it all the majesty of which he deemed it worthy. How should the Master be differentiated from the malefactors except by the awful serenity of voluntary endurance? How should the Divinity of the Crucified be manifested except by the conquest of material forces? And so, through the attempt to paint a creed instead of a fact, Art became untrue both to the Church and to the studio. For the Divinity of Christ when He lived amongst men was not visible. Had men seen it they could not have taken Him with wicked hands. Even His mother knew not that He was God. He hung upon the cross as did those who suffered with

Him. And Art had to choose between representing Him thus, or—an untruth. In choosing the untruth Art became degraded and ready to help religion with the lie that it held in its right hand. But religion is not to be served by a lie any more than is Art; and in accepting the alliance it became degraded too. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! it is not thou only that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee. What, through the nineteen centuries, have we done with the Likeness of the Master? It is too late now to ask whether the beautiful untruths to which men kneel have grown out of what seemed to be innocent love and holy adoration. It may be so—for it was not an enemy that did Him this dishonour. And yet the ruthless caricature traced by the cruel hands that scourged Him gave not so deep a wound as that which He received in the house of His friends when the worship of Christ changed into the worship of the crucifix.

And the hurt of the wound is not to Him alone, but through Him it reaches even to ourselves. Our right to look upon the Master's face, like every other right which we inherit, has by the shame of its abuse left us at times almost at our wits' end to discern where the right ceases and the wrong begins. Think for a moment of the

story of the Christ of Andernach. It was a stormy night, and a poor, sinful creature was wandering about the streets with her babe in her arms. She was hungry and cold, and no soul in Andernach would take her in. And when she came to the church where the great crucifix stands she saw no light in the little chapel; so she sat down outside, on a stone, at the foot of the cross, and prayed till she fell asleep. But she did not sleep long—for presently a bright light shone full in her face, and when she looked up she saw a pale man standing right before her. He was almost naked, and there was blood upon his hands and upon his side, and great tears were in his beautiful eyes, and his face was like the face of the Saviour on the cross. Not a single word did he say to her, but he looked at her compassionately and gave her a loaf of bread, and took the little babe in his arms and kissed it. Then the mother looked up at the great crucifix—but there was no image there, and she shrieked, and fell down as if she were dead. And no one would have believed her story if a woman who lived hard by had not heard the scream, and looking from the window had not seen the figure take the ladder from the wall and go up, and nail itself to the cross. Since that night, it is said, the figure has never moved again.

This is the legend of the Christ of Andernach.

Surely superstition and Art have become inextricably entangled. How shall we distinguish between their constituent elements.

As to the crucifix, it is but one of the rude images we see at almost every roadside on the Continent—terrible beyond expression in the grossness with which the subject is handled, yet in its rude way telling the Divine story with a certain degree of truth.

As to the legend, it is less difficult to separate the true from the false. The desolate mother, the beatific vision, these things exist not alone on the banks of the Rhine. The figure may no more come down, but the compassionate eyes that looked upon her shall so look upon others until time shall be no longer. So far the legend is true; then the lie begins. She who looking up saw no figure on the cross may have been blinded only by tears. She who from the window saw the strange sequel of the story must have been blinded by superstition.

But the legend and the crucifix together, are they not a type of Religion and Art in their relation to each other—the glory of the right use—the shame of the abuse? By virtue of its simple record of a truth in the bowed head, the outstretched arms, the pierced side, Art became the channel of the Divine consolation, lifting the soul from earth to heaven. By virtue also of its grossness, its record

only of the lesser truth, its limiting of the Divine Nature to the human, it became the foundation of a lying fable that would drag the Redeemer down from heaven to earth, and there nail Him once more upon the cross.

Art, however, had claimed its inheritance—the Likeness of Christ—and had clung to it throughout the dark ages. After the death of Constantine, the apostasy of Julian, and the division of the Empire, a sleep followed that might have been taken for death—but that it was troubled with evil dreams. But even in its dreams Art remembered the Likeness, and neither subtlety nor force could take away its part in Christ. At last the awakening came. The two records—one long hidden away in the libraries of the monasteries—the other stereotyped on the walls of the basilicas—were declared to the people by Luther and Raphael, who were born in the same year. The Words of Christ gave us the Reformation in Religion, the Likeness of Christ gave us the Renascence in Art.

THE AWAKENING

The study of the Words of Christ gave us the Reformation in Religion, the study of the Likeness of Christ gave us the Renascence in Art.

"FULL of grace and truth," S. John says, in describing the face of Christ. His words are πλήρης χάριτος καὶ ἀληθείας. Now χάριτος means kindness, and ἀληθείας means honesty. A kind and honest face—that is what S. John saw with his eyes. But S. John was speaking of the face of the living Christ, of which these early drawings give, as I have said, but a faint resemblance. How shall S. John's words—full of grace and truth—ever be realised by the painter? Who shall place on canvas the smile that irradiated His face when He took the little children in His arms and blessed them—or the look that broke Peter's heart—or the searching gaze from which the Scribes and Pharisees shrank abashed. To express adequately the exalted character and higher

emotions of the spiritual life is the noblest achievement of Art. It needs the vision of a great painter, and the language of a great poet, to define the art of portraiture at its highest. Lord Tennyson once asked Mr. G. F. Watts to describe his ideal of what a true portrait painter should be—and Mr. Watts' reply is enshrined in the "Idylls of the King"—

> "As when a painter, poring on a face
> Divinely, through all hindrance, finds the man
> Behind it, and so paints him that his face,
> The shape and colour of a mind and life,
> Lives for his children, ever at its best."

In this sense we have no likeness of Christ. Such an achievement would have been far beyond the reach of Roman portrait painters in the time of our Lord. To delineate the features—the fine broad forehead, the arched eyebrows, the straight nose, the kind and yet serious mouth, the falling of the hair upon the shoulders, the parting of the beard—all this was well within their power. Beyond all this lay the soul, which to their Art was an unknown quantity—just as the Divinity is still an unknown quantity even to the greatest of the painters of to-day.

Thus, if we look for expression in pictures of the face of Christ, we look for it in vain in the earlier records of Christian Art. It came with

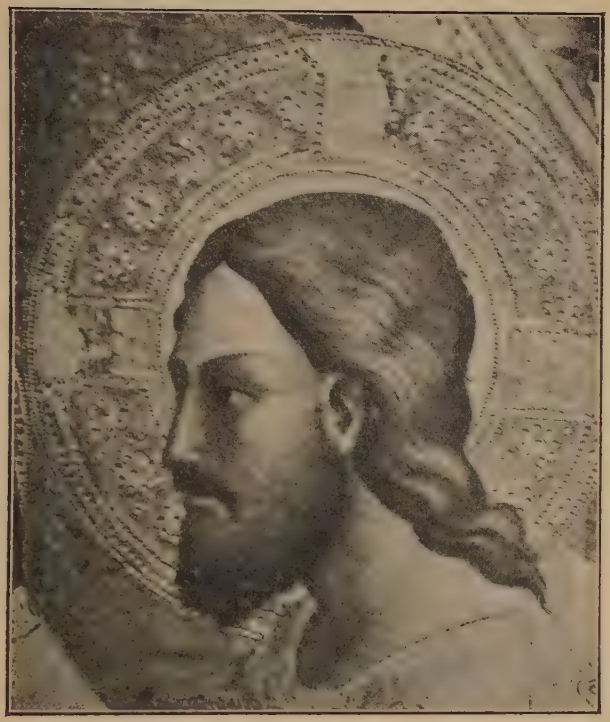

PLATE XX. THE AWAKENING

FROM A PAINTING BY GIOTTO
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

PLATE XXI. THE AWAKENING

FROM A PAINTING BY ORCAGNA
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

the Awakening. "Full of grace and truth," says S. John—and the frescoes of the catacombs say the same thing. The solemn eyes never change; the lip never quivers with emotion, is never compressed with anger or rebuke. And during the long centuries—from the time when the Church came forth from its hiding-place in the catacombs to the days of the early painters of the Renascence—the great mosaics of the basilicas have repeated the same story. In S. Paolo fuori le Mura, in SS. Cosma è Damiano, in the Baptistery of Constantine, in S. Prassede, in S. Pudenziana, it is always the same Christ, with the same grave and serene countenance, full of grace and truth.

Then came the great change. The Likeness remained, but to the Likeness was added expression. With the dawn of the Reformation came also the dawn of the Renascence. The Studio and the Church were emancipated at the same time. A thousand years of copying had been enough for the one—as a thousand years of priest-rule had been enough for the other. And as the religious movement came from within the Church—so the art movement came from within the Studio. The first painters of the Awakening were mosaic-workers whose lives had been spent in decorating the churches with the Likeness of Christ. Margaritone, Cimabue, Giotto, Orcagna

—were all trained in this great school. What an unfolding of the splendours of Paradise it must have been to these men when painting became the medium through which Christian emotion should be expressed. Even now, in climbing Giotto's tower we seem to get a little closer to Heaven, not defiantly, like the builders of Babel, but lovingly; seeing also the fields round Florence where as a lad Giotto had tended his sheep. And at Pisa, in the Campo Santo, when the sun streams down the long arcade, we see

> "Azure and scarlet, which still breathe
> Orcagna's life—whilst overhead
> The blue tides of a southern sky
> Set round a minster front of snow."

Giotto was born about the same year as Dante, and the two were friends. He was a disciple of Cimabue—to whom he was indebted for the first recognition of his genius. But he proved stronger than his master—for he broke away from the trammels of the Byzantine schools, by which Margaritone and Cimabue were still entangled. He lived to be a working contemporary of Orcagna, and the lives of these two painters covered a little more than a century—from 1266 to 1368. Then, after a dark but happily brief, night, in which the very existence of Art seemed threatened, came Fra Angelico. The name is but a sobriquet,

PLATE XXII. THE AWAKENING

FROM A PAINTING BY FRA ANGELICO
IN THE PINACOTHEK, MUNICH

PLATE XXIII. THE AWAKENING

FROM A PAINTING BY VAN EYCK
IN THE ROYAL GALLERY, BERLIN

for Giovanni da Fiesole—just as Orcagna is a sobriquet for Andrea di Cione, who was called Arcagnuolo, the Archangel. The name expresses very well the religious fervour with which he followed Art. It was the "blessed" Fra Angelico who refused to lay down his palette even in exchange for the archbishopric of Florence. And with Angelico—but far away in the North—Van Eyck shone like the moon seen after sunrise. I have given examples from the works of these four men. They mark the transition from the simple portraiture with which the Church had hitherto been content, to the imaginative renderings which were to follow. The frescoes and glass pictures of the catacombs had served their purpose in securing the Likeness. The mosaics of the basilicas had preserved it through the dark ages. And now the dawn of the Renascence of Art was breaking. The sun was indeed high in the heavens when Van Eyck invented oil painting, and painted his Rex Regum. The sacred tradition, however, sufficed. The King of Kings is grave, but not wrathful. Van Eyck, like Giotto and Orcagna, is content to follow the mosaics of the basilicas.

And so, when Rome and Florence and Pisa begin to speak the language of Art, they tell the same story. But they do not speak alone. It is being told also by every altarpiece in Christendom,

as it had been told at first in every secret chamber of the catacombs. And as one Gospel contains the life of Christ and is yet supplemented by another—so the frescoes of the catacombs and the mosaics of the basilicas are supplemented by the pictures of the Renascence. The first Christian painters never represented the sufferings of Christ. No man paints the portrait of his friend in the agony of death—it is the living face, that can give back love for love and smile for smile, that personal affection desires to recall. But when Van Eyck paints Christ as the King of Kings, and Angelico the lifting of His lifeless body from the cross—surely there will be a difference. From this time the painter is no more content to paint the Likeness of Christ apart from expression. The whole story of His life must now be told—not in the passionless simplicity of portraiture with which it had been told in the catacombs and the basilicas—but with the passion of the great revival of Art, and with the knowledge that makes the human face an open book to the artist.

THE RENASCENCE

With the Renascence of Art expression was added to the Likeness, but the Likeness remained the same.

OF the great painters of the Renascence there are five men to whom we must look as representatives of Italian Art at its highest. They are, naming them in the order of their birth —Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Titian, Raphael, and Correggio. From this quintet have come the finest interpretations of the face of Christ the world has ever seen.

And of these five there is none whose name is held in higher reverence than that of the Florentine, Leonardo da Vinci. He was a pupil of Andrea Verrocchio, and it is said that the master, on seeing the young painter's work, abandoned painting, in despair of ever attaining an excellence that Leonardo seemed to reach at a stride. Da Vinci was essentially a learned painter ; skilled

in the science of Art; a poet; a musician; an architect; an engineer; a mathematician; certainly a man of affairs; perhaps even a statesman. He founded an Academy of Arts at Milan, where he drew round him many younger painters who in their turn became founders of schools. It was at Milan that Leonardo painted the greatest of his pictures—the "Last Supper"—and it is by this picture that he is most generally known. Unhappily this masterpiece has nearly perished. The refectory of the convent of Santa Maria has dealt less kindly with it even than the catacombs with the frescoes of the early Christians. The beautiful ideal over which Da Vinci pondered half his lifetime would indeed have been quite lost to us but for a finished study of it that he himself made. This study, reproduced on Plate XXIV, is preserved in the Accademia di Belle Arti.

Da Vinci remained at Milan for about seventeen years, returning to Florence in 1499. He died in 1519. But the face of Christ he never finished. He had attempted more than Art could accomplish; he had attempted to imagine a face that should take the place of the face which Christians had known for fifteen hundred years. And with what result? The likeness in it is after all the Likeness of Christ except in one particular. The brow is the same—the features are the same—the hair is the same—only there is no beard. Now

PLATE XXIV. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A DRAWING BY LEONARDO DA VINCI
IN THE ACADEMIA, MILAN

here is a strange thing. The beard which Leonardo da Vinci did not accept from the traditions of his own craft is the one characteristic that can be established by evidence apart from Art altogether. To the race of which Christ came the beard was sacred; and the Evangelist, who knew Christ face to face, adopts the words of Isaiah as descriptive of the cruel scourging, "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair."

There are very few works remaining by this great master. Dr. Richter enumerates no fewer than nineteen of which all trace is lost; and Sir Edward Poynter adds that those which can with any certainty be ascribed to him are only nine, including the "Last Supper." In the gallery of Prince Lichtenstein, however, there is a painting, very elaborate and highly wrought, said to be by Da Vinci, of Christ bearing the cross, in which the commonly received Likeness is frankly and vividly rendered. The picture has both the strength and the weakness of this great painter. The tenderness—the learned technicality—become almost affectations, and distress us, as we are distressed by the works of the Decadents. We feel that Da Vinci had not yet seen the direct vision—just as we feel that Guido Reni had lost it, and that Carlo Dolci had never even been conscious of its existence.

But when we turn to Michael Angelo it is a very different matter. Michael Angelo holds us as in the grasp of a giant. If we are distressed it is only for a moment, and it is with fear rather than with doubt: a fear, however, that never degenerates into weakness, but is rather transmuted into love. The head which I have chosen in this case is undoubtedly from the painter's noblest work—the great fresco which covers the wall of the Sistine Chapel.

In this picture, again, the verisimilitude is not preserved. Of the painter's reverence for the ancient Likeness and his final acceptance of it, I shall speak in an Illustrative Note on "Angelo and the Veronica." But, profoundly as Michael Angelo was moved by the passion of Christianity, yet the discovery of the lost statues of Greece filled him with yearnings after the splendours of the great Pagan schools. In laying out his plans for the transepts of S. Peter's, he remembers that Christ stretched out his arms upon the cross for us. But in carving a *pietà*, or in painting our Lord's second coming, his Christ must be a God, and his conception of a God he finds only in the antique. There is moreover another aspect of the question to be considered. The painter, looking back into the infinite past, or forward into the infinite future, sees Christ—but sees no marks of

the passion, no pain, no sorrow, no infirmity of the flesh—but Christ related to us only through the taking upon Himself of our nature. Instead therefore of a likeness, the picture becomes a symbol :—as frankly a symbol as are the first two letters of His name XP, or the word IXΘYC—the sacred acrostic—or the figure of a lamb—or the legend AGNUS DEI. It is true the symbol chosen by Michael Angelo is greater than these, and more worthy of the Redeemer : that is only in accordance with the genius of the painter. Michael Angelo was not content to represent a letter of the Greek alphabet judging the world. But the figure which stands for Christ is not the less symbol because it is expressed in terms of the human form. It is not a likeness, but it shows by visible contrast how infinitely more exalted, as well as more tender, is the simplest rendering of a natural truth than any symbol the imagination even of the greatest genius can devise.

More exalted, more tender—not *as well as* more true—but *because* more true. For the three are not simply co-ordinates, they are resultants. It is well for us to realize from a consideration of this example, the work of one of the greatest painters the world has known, what Christian Art might have become if we had possessed no authentic, no authoritative record of the Likeness, but had rested upon the imaginings of lesser men.

Michael Angelo was at least strong, but ten thousand tongues, chattering their feeble thoughts in rivalry with each other would have resulted in a confusion greater than that of Babel.

Michael Angelo, however, like Leonardo da Vinci, did not reject the Likeness. There are some very fine works of his in which he has rendered it, with extraordinary majesty and tenderness of expression. We have two of these in England. One is in the National Gallery, of which a reproduction is given on Plate XXVI. It is an unfinished painting, but strongly characteristic of the master. The other is in the British Museum, a delicate drawing in chalk on gray paper, full of mystery, and the passionate religious feeling manifested in his intercourse with Vittoria Colonna. The drawing was given to her by him; perhaps they had studied the Likeness together.

In approaching such a subject as the picture of the "Dies Iræ," one must move with careful steps. Almost every writer seems to come with some preconception that gives a bias to his judgment. One critic describes Michael Angelo's Christ as "a thundering athlete—a nude, wrathful giant, without one touch of pity or mercy in Him," and contrasts it with the "Fair Shepherd" of the catacombs, the sweet, solemn mosaics of the basilicas, and the lovely sculptures of our Gothic churches.

PLATE XXV. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY MICHAEL ANGELO
IN THE SISTINE CHAPEL

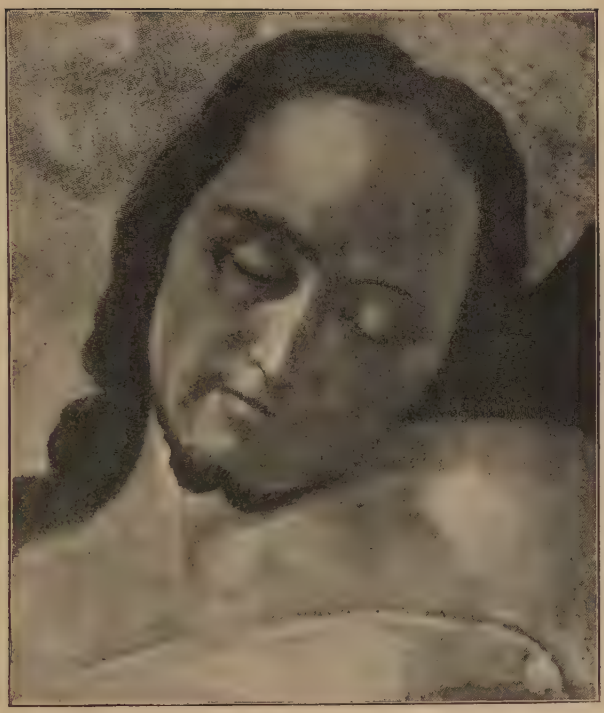

PLATE XXVI. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY MICHAEL ANGELO
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

He condemns it as partly the cause and partly the effect of the cruel, dark views of Christianity prevailing in the sixteenth century. "What a chasm," he says. "What a chasm separates the Christ of the Sistine Chapel from the Fair Shepherd of the catacombs!" Yes; but then what a chasm separates also heaven and hell!

It is the common failing of amateur criticism to look for qualities in a work of Art that are incompatible with the artist's primary intention. Thus, one complains that the eyes are stern—forgetting that they are the eyes of Christ when He was rebuking the Pharisees. Another objects that they are too tender—forgetting that they are the eyes of Christ comforting the women who wept as He fell beneath the cross. When Angelo represents the infant Saviour, caressed by Joseph and Mary, he represents Him as a child. When he paints Christ as Creator, he gives Him divine strength and knowledge and benignity. When the dead Christ lies once more on His mother's knee, he shows the pity of it. When Christ rises to judge the world, Michael Angelo represents Him as the Avenger. Did the beloved disciple darken the imagination of Christendom? and yet he writes: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen." That is what Michael Angelo has painted.

But whether Dean Farrar's criticism of Michael Angelo's great picture is just or not, his description of it is magnificent. "This nude, wrathful giant," he says, "looks down upon the damned, whom he is hurling into darkness as a crushed, agonised, demon-tortured rainstorm of ruined humanity, with inexorable rejection. His muscular right arm is uplifted as though at once to drive away and smite. He is just rising from his seat, and in the next moment will stand terrifically upright. The Virgin shrinks terrified under the protection of His arm."

Is there a cryptogram underlying all great Art, that different men read such different meanings in the same line, the same brush-mark, the same presentment of vision? To me it seems that the Mother, so far from shrinking from Him in terror, turns to find shelter in His wounded side. She remains a woman still, but her son is a God. The picture which the Dean places in comparison with this is the "Dies Domini" of Sir Edward Burne-Jones. I believe however that both pictures are right. The attitude is singularly the same in each. The right arm is uplifted. In the "Dies Iræ" it is uplifted to strike. "*Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*" In the "Dies Domini" it is raised to show the pierced side. "*Come unto Me.*" But it is the same Christ. Surely, as our Lord moved amongst men, His features remained

the same. Surely, in different circumstances, the expression of His countenance changed. That is what Art says in the works of the painters of the Renascence. Does the Church teach differently? Does the Church say there is no wrath, no terror, in the "Dies Iræ"?

But there is peril to the critic who attempts to interpret the work of a great painter through his character, or to interpret his character through his works. Art is a force that bends men to its purpose despite their character. At the very time when Michael Angelo was painting this picture of the terrors of the Last Judgment, he wrote to Vittoria Colonna, the woman he loved: "I am going in search of truth with uncertain step. My heart, always wavering between vice and virtue, suffers and faints, like a weary traveller wandering in the dark." There is no fierceness in this. Nor, indeed, when the great painter turns from the mood of self-introspection to the controversies of the studios, does he appear to be the "terrible fellow" the critics love to paint him. He contends for the supremacy of Italian Art. But that is natural in a painter born in Arezzo, educated in Florence, living and working in Rome. Flemish Art, he thinks, is more devout than that of Italy. "Italian painting," he says, "will never bring a tear to the eye, while Flemish will make many a tear to flow. Flemish Art will always seem

beautiful to women, priests, and nuns,—and even to noble spirits, if they are deaf to true harmony. But it is only works executed in Italy that are really true Art." And he adds that "Good painting is in itself religious and noble. It is a reaching after His perfection, the shading of His pencil, and unites us to God."

From Michael Angelo we turn to Titian. Unhappily, the relations between Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci were strained. Michael Angelo drove Da Vinci from Florence; but Titian was his friend. They were nearly of the same age, and met each other in Venice and Florence and Rome, each the accredited master of a great school. Titian is a man strongly built, full of life and movement; the proportions of his face are perfect, the forehead high, the brow bold and projecting, the features finely chiselled. There is a marked likeness between Titian and Angelo, even to the lines of their beards, worn a little short and pointed, and the fineness of their hands. But how different are their temperaments! How different their Art! Angelo is "of imagination all compact." Titian is altogether controlled by the sense of beauty—and of beauty, especially the beauty of colour. And now these two men, both masters of their craft, each from a different point of view, approach the subject of the Likeness of Christ. The head I have

PLATE XXVII. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY TITIAN
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

chosen to represent Titian is from the famous picture at Dresden of "The Tribute Money." Christ is standing between the two disputants, who think to disarm him with a little flattery. "Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God, neither carest thou for any man. Tell us, therefore, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" One is showing Him the coin, not yet realising the significance of the question, "Whose is this image and superscription?" There is no great manifestation of passion or emotion in this. It is the strong presentment of a living man; it is the splendour of colour; it is the mastery of technique; in a word, it is the work of Titian. But it is also the face of Christ—not agonising in the garden, not dying upon the cross, not transfigured with blissful emotion; but calm and thoughtful, the Jewish type well observed, the Likeness vividly realised. It cannot be described better than in the words of S. John—an honest and kind face.

Titian, however, is by no means limited to the expression of beauty without passion. His range is through all the regions of intellectual, sensual, or emotional Art. How this subject of the Likeness of Christ held his imagination may be seen in the few pathetic words with which his life closed. "Dear to me," he says, "dear to me are the mountains of Cadore and the rushing waters

of the Piave, and the murmur of the wind in the pine trees, where my home lies far away. But not there! In the city where I have laboured—in the church where I achieved my first triumph—bury me there! Promise to bury me there, and I will yet live to paint for you another 'Christ,' a 'Christ of Pity,' that shall be more near to what He is than any that has yet been painted, even as I am by so many years the nearer to seeing Him myself." Titian was an old man then, bent with the age of ninety-nine years—the plague struck him down—and the *pietà* was never finished.

And then, from a little town in the East, between the Apennines and the Adriatic, comes Raphael d'Urbino. Raphael was, as so many great painters have been, himself the son of a painter. Nothing that Art could yield in the way of teaching was withheld from him. Michael Angelo and Da Vinci and Masaccio were his inspiration in Florence and Rome. He had learned all that could be taught of perspective, of the technique of Art, of the science of Art. Artists were employed for him to make sketches in Southern Italy and Greece. And now he too must paint this face of Christ. Again we are able to turn to the greatest work of a great master. The picture of the Transfiguration is his masterpiece. The figure of our Lord is sublime. And

PLATE XXVIII. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY RAPHAEL
IN ST. PETER'S, ROME

the face! It expresses the rapture of actual communion with God. The hair is lifted by a breath that comes from Paradise. The eyes, large and full, look up without fear, without regret. There is no cloud between Him and the Father; there is no exultation; there is no pain. Raphael has realised the words of S. John more nearly than they have ever been realised before.

Da Vinci and Raphael died in the year 1520 —the one a veteran of seventy-five, the other scarcely having reached the full strength of manhood. And now we come to the youngster of the group, Correggio, the illustrious master of the Lombard School. Titian and Michael Angelo were still living, both of them men of between thirty and forty when Correggio was a lad of nineteen. Little is known of his early life, except that he was not the disciple of any of the great painters. There is nothing more interesting in Art than to observe the relation between the elder and younger men. Naturally the young learn from the old, but the old learn also from the young if they are true artists. Correggio has left his mark upon Art, which can never be effaced; but he was not a follower of any School. He never studied the antique, yet he is the apostle of the grace of form. He never troubled to visit Rome, yet Giulio Romano, a Roman born and

bred—the favourite disciple of Raphael—declared that the paintings of Correggio were the finest he had ever seen. They are indeed unrivalled in grace of form. There are no smart touches in his handling; his technique is tender and sweet. Women and children and angels, nymphs and goddesses, are his theme. The "Gypsy" Madonna of Naples is the portrait of his wife. The "Assumption" in the dome of the cathedral of Parma is a floating glory of fair forms. But the face that every Christian painter is painting, draws him by its fascination, and he too must paint Christ. He paints "The Agony in the Garden," and the "Ecce Homo," and of these I have taken the latter from our own National Gallery. As Da Vinci shows us the Comforter, as Angelo shows us the Avenger, as Raphael shows us the Son communing with the Father, as Titian shows us the Man Christ Jesus reasoning with His opponents, so Correggio shows us the Christ "made flesh" and suffering.

Did these painters of the Renascence more than other men love Christ? did they understand Him better? that they painted Him so divinely:

> "Flower o' the peach,
> Death for us all, and his own life for each."

That is the refrain of Fra Lippo Lippi's song, as

PLATE XXIX. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY CORREGGIO
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

he escapes from the cloister of the Carmelites for a night's revel in the streets of Florence.

> "What would one have?
> In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more chance—
> Four great walls in the New Jerusalem
> Meted on each side by the angel's reed
> For Leonard, Rafael, Agnolo, and me
> To cover."

That is the highest aspiration of Andrea del Sarto—in which Christ finds no place. But listen once more to Robert Browning:

> "The beauty and the wonder and the power,
> The shapes of things, their colours, light and shades,
> Changes, surprises——Art was made for that;
> God uses us to help each other so——"

—so that even if these men did not fully understand Christ, Christ understood them, and perhaps loved them too.

But love takes many forms, and we cannot see into each other's hearts. How Luini must have dreamed over his young Christ. The face is animated with sweet reasonableness. The Likeness is finely preserved, even though there is no beard, for it is the face of a youth. It is the lad with kind and true eyes—with whom S. John had played when they were children together. I count it one of the most beautiful visions left to us by the painters of the Renascence.

And Lucas Cranach, the friend of Luther, and himself a sturdy reformer, must have dreamed—and loved too. The thorn-crowned head shows only the anguish of the Redeemer—scourged, mocked, forsaken; but the picture contains a singularly tender and beautiful episode. Around the head of our Lord are a company of cherub angels, leaning forward their young faces to kiss Him.

There were, of course, many other great painters of the Renascence who not only exalted Art, but poured out the passion of their lives upon this subject. In Venice there were the Bellini, the immediate forerunners of Titian. The painting from which the head on Plate XXXII is taken is in the Royal Gallery, Berlin. It represents our Lord as the Great Teacher, His right hand pointing to heaven, the book in His left. But it is little more than a transcript of the mosaic in SS. Cosma è Damiano, where our Lord stands in the same attitude, holding in His left hand a scroll instead of a book. The faces are wonderfully alike, and there was no occasion for the expression of passion or emotion in the action of the benign Lawgiver.

Then there was Ghirlandaio, the master of Angelo, the favourite of Florence and Rome and Pisa and Siena—a little dry, perhaps, and stiff in manner, but resourceful in invention; there was

PLATE XXX. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY LUINI
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

PLATE XXXI. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY LUCAS CRANACH
IN THE ROYAL GALLERY, DRESDEN

PLATE XXXII. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY BELLINI IN
THE ROYAL GALLERY, BERLIN

PLATE XXXIII. THE RENASCENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY QUENTYN MATSYS
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

PLATE XXXIV. THE DECADENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY VANDYKE IN THE
ROYAL GALLERY, BUCKINGHAM PALACE

PLATE XXXV. THE DECADENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY REMBRANDT
IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY

PLATE XXXVI. THE DECADENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY GUIDO RENI
IN THE ROYAL GALLERY, BERLIN

PLATE XXXVII. THE DECADENCE

FROM A PAINTING BY VELASQUEZ IN THE MUSEUM OF THE PRADO, MADRID

Botticelli, the master of Lippo Lippi the younger, as he was the disciple of Lippi the elder—Fra Lippi—the scapegrace of convent life, who, again, was the pupil of Masaccio; there was Andrea del Sarto—the rival of Raphael—with capacity for the highest achievements, but weighed down with the chains of a dissolute life. There were Cimabue, Giotto, Orcagna, Cima, Mantegna, Verrocchio, Perugino, Tintoretto, Veronese, Giulio Romano. The works of these men cover the whole period of the transition from twilight to dawn, from dawn to midday, of Italian Art.

But the Renascence of Art was not in Italy alone. In Spain, Morales so touched the hearts of the people with his *pietàs* that he was called *el divino*. In Flanders, Memling was making beauty for the shrines of beautiful churches. In Germany, Dürer was illustrating the life of Christ through the new evangel of the press. In England, Holbein, sent over from Basle by his friend Erasmus, became the guest of Sir Thomas More, and painted many of his finest works for the king. The head by Quentyn Matsys is from a painting in the National Gallery. Comparing it with the Bellini we perceive how the two men—so differently environed—were dominated by the same tradition. And if we turn to Plate V the secret is revealed: the Flemish painter, not less than

the Venetian, has taken his ideal of Christ direct from the mosaics of the basilicas. There is a quaint legend that the rose of Palestine flowers only in the Holy Land, and on the night when Christ was born; but the rose of our garden unfolds its blossoms wheresoever there is a painter in Christendom.

These men all painted Christ, whether they knew Him or not, whether they followed Him or not. Their paintings are the corolla of my flower, as the mosaics of the basilicas and the relics of the catacombs are the stamen and the calyx. But the petals withered in the Decadence, and though they retain something of the colour and perfume of the rose, they are scattered leaves rather than the rose itself. In the four heads which I have selected to represent the Likeness of Christ as rendered by the painters of the Decadence, there is still much to remind one of the great magicians. Guido Reni amongst the Italians, Velasquez of Spain, Vandyck and Rembrandt of the Low Countries are not unworthy of the traditions they inherited. The "Ecce Homo" of Guido is from the famous picture in Dresden—one of many painted by the artist, in his dexterous and accomplished manner. It is, perhaps, more human and less divine—if we know what it is to be divine—than the conceptions of the earlier schools. The "Crucifixion," by

Velasquez, is the expression of the agony of death, by the most realistic of painters. How many times had Velasquez seen such suffering as that, in the living—the dying—faces of the martyrs in the city of Madrid, where the picture now hangs? The Rembrandt is from a picture in the National Gallery, of Christ blessing little children. The magnificent head by Vandyck is from his painting in Buckingham Palace, of Christ healing the sick. There is little sentiment in it, but there is fine painting—and its frank realism almost disarms the critic. But when the petals have fallen from a rose they never grow again.

CHRIST IN MODERN ART

The Likeness of Christ is the one thing in which all Christian Churches and all Schools of Art are agreed.

OF the Likeness of Christ in Modern Art the story is quickly told. It does not change—any more than it has changed during the darkness of the catacombs, or the twilight of the middle ages, or the blaze of meridian splendour which made the Renascence of Art the glory of the sixteenth century. Creeds have differed; Churches have separated; Nations have struggled for the mastery in religion, and for their particular interpretation of the teaching of Christ; but they have all alike accepted Him as represented in Art. If Art was the battle-ground of the early Church, it is now the only common ground on which there is no strife. There is no difference between the Likeness as adopted in Italy, or France, or Germany, or Spain, or England; there is no difference

between the Latin, the Greek, and the Anglican communions; there is no difference between the Old World and the New. High, and Low, and Broad—Churchman and Nonconformist—Protestant and Catholic—are agreed in this. As the petals of the flower are one, and live by the same sap, so the Likeness is one, and is inspired by the same original.

This fidelity to a type does not by any means detract, however, from the originality of conception with which the modern painter can deal with his theme. To have a theme is not a restraint to genius but an incentive. It is only the false that cannot conform to facts. The portrait painter never claims to have invented his subject. The problem he has to solve is to put before us, not something new and strange, but something we shall recognise. There may be portraits which are not likenesses, as we see too often in the works of inferior artists. There may be likenesses which are not portraits, as we see when two men resemble each other in countenance. But in the discernment of the soul, as well as the body, there is scope enough for the highest faculties of the greatest genius, and it is in this direction that the highest triumphs of Art have been achieved. Thus, in taking for his theme the historic Likeness of Christ, the painter has in-

herited all the splendour of the past and all the promise of the future. He holds in his hand treasures, the use of which can be limited only by his capacity to reflect the Divine mind.

How are these treasures being used to-day? The three examples by Holman Hunt, Bonnat, and Von Uhde are from England, France, and Germany. They serve to show the retention of the Likeness. But that is an incident only in the movement that is taking place in Modern Art—a necessary incident, however—for, without the retention of the Likeness, the special meaning of the new school would be unintelligible. I refer, of course, to the painting of the figure of Christ in the midst of scenes and accessories of the present moment. Thus Beraud's picture, which excited so much attention in the Salon recently, represents a dining-room in Paris. At the table, furnished with all the luxuries of Parisian life, a company of gentlemen are seated. Amongst them is one who bears the Likeness, and at his feet lies a woman —not an outcast from the street, Society would not permit that—but a lady, dressed in Parisian costume, *chic*, and beautiful with the beauty that comes with the white splendours of fine muslin. We do not see her face. The chief point of the painting lies in the variety of expression of the faces of the men. The picture is called, "Christ

PLATE XXXVIII. CHRIST IN MODERN ART

FROM A PAINTING BY FRITZ VON UHDE

PLATE XXXIX. CHRIST IN MODERN ART

FROM A PAINTING BY LEON BONNAT

in the House of Simon the Pharisee." Another picture by the same painter represents the Via Crucis. Christ has fallen beneath the weight of the cross, and is taunted by the rabble multitude. The people are not the Jewish people, or Orientals such as might have been there; they are our own people—the street ruffian, the scum of the slums of Paris or of London—yes, and the respectable people too, who would join in hunting down one whose teaching interfered with their business. The picture is indeed a sharp satire on the Christianity of the nineteenth century.

Then in Germany also this association of the Likeness of Christ with the common events of life has become a theme of Modern Art. A beautiful example of this is to be found in Von Uhde's painting of "The Journey to Emmaus." We see a lane outside a Dutch village; the light lies low on the horizon; the trees are dark against the sky, for it is evening; two men are trudging homewards along the lane, when they are joined by a third—Christ. It is the old story freshly told, and seems to make Palestine lie very close to our doors.

After all, however, the new movement is not so very new. It is just what Rembrandt did when he painted Christ amidst Dutch Boers. It is

what the Church required when it asked for altar-pieces in which Christ and his Mother should appear, surrounded by ecclesiastics. Or is Christ only for ecclesiastics and not for laymen? In a quaint old painting in the Museum at Nuremberg, representing the Nativity of our Lord, the blessed Mother is sitting up in bed, on an orthodox spring mattress and bedstead of strictly German make. The Child is attended by some old gossips, one of whom is bringing in refreshment, apparently of the nature of a caudle, suitable for the invalid. The utensils are painted even more carefully than the dinner service in Beraud's picture. There is nothing new under the sun.

I am not sure that there is nothing new under the sun; for after nineteen centuries, during which this subject of Christ—His birth, His childhood, His teaching, His suffering, His death, His resurrection, His ascension, His coming again—has been repeated by countless thousands of artists, a picture has been painted with an absolutely new idea—an idea so divinely beautiful that one is amazed that it has not been anticipated—so fresh that it carries us back to the old days when men painted that which they had seen with their eyes. "Christ upon the Tree of Life," designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones is a gift from the New World to the Old. It has been executed in mosaic on the triumphal arch of the American Church in

PLATE XL. CHRIST IN MODERN ART

FROM A PAINTING BY W. HOLMAN HUNT

Rome, and so takes its place with the imperishable records of the past. It represents our Lord with outstretched arms, not upon a cross, but upon the Tree of Life, which bears its fruit for the healing of the nations. Upon His hands and His side are no marks of the passion, for the sacrifice did not begin on Calvary—it began with His life upon earth. On His right is Adam, or man, with folded hands, adoring. Beyond this figure are the fields he shall till, and the sheaves of corn which shall crown his labour. On the other side is a group of exquisite beauty. Eve, the mother of the race He came to redeem, with two children; one, Abel, a baby on her breast; the other, Cain, a boy of three or four, clinging to the skirt of her garment. Beyond her is a garden of flowers, in the midst of which is a lily, the type of the Madonna. And over all are the arms, beneath which they shall find shelter. In the wide range of Art I know nothing more lovely, more human, more Divine, than this.

And yet, in this great picture, which I believe to be one of the greatest works of the age, there is no likeness. It is the one exception in Modern Art, as the Christ of the "Dies Iræ" by Michael Angelo is the one exception of the Renascence. But in each the justification is the same. They do not pretend to represent Christ as men knew

Him on Earth. They are attempts to represent the unknown by symbol. The one takes account of the Past, the other looks forward to the Future. Against both of them Theology may have something to say—and Art may have no defence. What was the Word—who, in the counsels of the Eternal Father, before being made flesh, determined the redemption of our race? What will the Judge be like at the Great Assize? That can be defined no more by the Theologian than by the Artist. In Art at least it can be expressed only by symbol. And the symbol chosen by these great artists for the Son of God, who was also the Son of Man, is the figure and form common to the sons of men.

I have reserved for my last illustration of the Likeness of Christ one that is perhaps the best known and most loved of them all. I suppose that there is scarcely a home in England which does not possess it in some form, as an etching, or an engraving. It is reproduced here by a process of photogravure direct from a painting by Mr. Holman Hunt. "The Light of the World" is not to be passed over simply as a popular picture. It is much more than that. It is popular as a divine melody from Handel's "Messiah" is popular—or a great hymn of the Church—which expresses in a higher form of language than that

of common life the passion of religious emotion. It does this, not by sinking to a lower level, but by raising us to a higher. Is the Christ in this picture the Man of Sorrows? There is sorrow in His face. Is it Christ the Great Teacher? It brings to our minds words not only of consolation, but of warning. Is it Christ the Judge? But with the authority and strength we see tenderness and compassion. It is the Christ Rex Regum who stands at our door and knocks.

Happily for the men who are now painting Christ, the days are past when Art could corrupt Theology—or Theology could emasculate Art. The Church and the Studio understand each other better—the independence of their witness—the limitations of their authority. In dealing with the Likeness they have a common motive, and a common rule of action. The motive is the love of Christ—the controlling law is Truth.

DECEIVED OR DECEIVER

A retrospect and a dilemma.

BEFORE I lay down my pen I would refer to a fine passage by one who differs altogether from my views on this subject. Dr. Farrar says that "Art cannot deceive. It is an unerring self-revelation of the character both of nations and of individuals. The Art of every age and country infallibly reflects the tone, the temper, the religious attitude of which it is the expression." If this is true—and I, of course, cannot but accept it, for it is the whole thesis of my book, "The Witness of Art"—if this is true, then everything I have said here is vindicated. The relics of the catacombs infallibly reflect the tone, the temper, the religious attitude of the early Christians, from the days of the Apostles. They made the dark chambers beautiful as with the visible presence of the Master. His face overshadowed the graves of His martyrs. His likeness hung round the

necks of women who died trusting in Him. His acts of love and mercy were pictured on the dreadful walls. Since then the Church of Christ has been the guardian and keeper of the Likeness of Christ.

We are told to-day that this Likeness is a delusion. If so—has the Church been the deceiver—or has it been deceived? Looking back on what I have written I perceive that it is not the year only that is growing old—the centuries, the millenniums, are growing old also. It is not only that the time of roses is past—we are invited to throw away the one rose that remains to us, because it seems a little touched by the frost. And yet—as the children still love to decorate the house—so our artists are still striving to make the world more beautiful. Amongst their highest conceptions of beauty I find this Likeness. They have followed it for nearly two thousand years. Is it a phantasm—a will-o'-the-wisp? Before we can believe it to be so we must be convinced that two special miracles have been wrought—the first to conceal the true Likeness, in order that it might never be degraded to superstitious uses; the second, for the purpose of misleading the Universal Church into accepting the false. In reply to the first hypothesis, it is sufficient to point out that if a miracle has been wrought for such a purpose it has been ineffectual. The second

hypothesis is even more untenable. It violates our faith in the Divine Being as the Author of verity.

This is a question that cannot properly be dealt with through the ordinary weapons of humour or satire. It is impossible, however, to be unmoved by a grim sense of incongruity in the supposition that it could be in accordance with the will of Christ, that throughout the Christian Dispensation a false image should have been held steadily before the eyes of His people; misleading them in all their thoughts of Him; showing them always another—not Himself—doing the things He did, blessing the children, comforting the women, teaching the men, suffering for us all; or that He could, and did, control the record of the writer, but that He could not, or did not, control the record of the painter. There was indeed amongst the old gods one who had two faces. He represented the rising and the setting sun. He held the keys of heaven and hell. Through him alone it was believed that our prayers could reach Olympus. But the temple of Janus was shut by Augustus in the very year when Christ was born. I know not whether it is right or safe to regard one attribute of the Divine Being as of more account than another. If the sense of His love comes very closely home to our hearts, the confidence in His sincerity comes equally home to our

intelligence. Christ has shown to us not only His hands and His feet, but His face. Where then —and when—was the knowledge of the face of Christ lost—if it is lost? Not in the grave—for He saw no corruption. Not in the Resurrection—for He was recognised by the brethren. Not in the Ascension—for we have the promise of His coming again in like form. The disciples believed not for joy—Why do we disbelieve?

Now see! If the petals of our rose had been only artificial, not all the gold of Arabia or the wisdom of the wise men could so have put them together that they should grow as a living flower. But if they are real, even though they may be torn asunder and scattered, their colour remains and their fragrance clings to them still.

And it is so with the likenesses we have been considering. They are but scattered petals; nevertheless they come from a living stem, and Art reverences them, being true, for their truth's sake.

FOR EVER

EASTER IN THE STUDIO

The Painter's tribute to Christ.

THE Church of Christ, then, has neither been a deceiver, nor has it been deceived. It still holds in its keeping the Likeness of Christ. The question, however, is no longer as to the scattered petals of a rose; it is a question as to the sun itself; it is the question whether the sun is still in the heavens. The years grow old; centuries, millenniums pass, and the old gods pass with them, not to return. But Easter returns—and what Baldur was to the forefathers of our race; what Osiris was to the Egyptian; what Adonis was to the Greek, that—at least—Christ is to the Christian.

And thus Easter has become not only the chief festival of Christendom, marking the rising of our Sun-God, but also the central theme of Christian

Art—the theme fullest of inspiration to the artist. There appears, indeed, to be nothing in heaven, or earth, or hell, that does not yield tribute to the painter, or that he does not attempt in some form to place upon his canvas: so that the words, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," acquire in the studio a new and strange meaning, a meaning quite unknown to the theologian. But still, Easter is the centre of light to which all turn who seek the expression of the passion of human life exalted to the Divine, or the Divine life made manifest for a moment through its contact with humanity. There is Whitsuntide; but the painter who tries to represent the Pentecostal flame will either know not what to say, or will soon find himself speaking in an unknown tongue. There is Trinity; but even the imagination of Michael Angelo quailed before that subject, and in his famous fresco in the Sistine Chapel, of the creation of Adam, he ventures upon no real representation of the Triune God. There is Advent, the theme of poets from the time when a contemporary of our first parents wrote, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints." And this, Michael Angelo—after thinking it over for nearly half a century—did essay to paint, and his painting of it is the eighth wonder of the world. But how many are there amongst men born of women who could

enter upon such a trial of strength as that, and even so much as hope to come off victorious? And last of all there is Christmas, with all its happy associations and bright visions—the "star-led wizards on the eastern road," the "meek-eyed Peace crowned with olive green." No picture ever has been painted—no, nor shall be—more beautiful than that described by Milton, in his "Hymn On the Morning of Christ's Nativity"—

"But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her babe to rest,

* * *

"Heaven's youngest teemèd star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
And all about the courtly stable
Bright harness'd angels sit, in order serviceable."

I say no more beautiful picture could be painted, and that is true: but beauty is of many orders; and, as Christmas passes into the Epiphany, and the Epiphany into Lent, the painter finds that there are greater subjects for his pencil than angel, or woman, or child—that in the life, and passion, and death of Christ are to be found the strongest, the fullest, the most divine, inspiration that Art can receive from Religion.

For by the word "Easter" I do not mean the Paschal feast alone, but the whole group of events

clustering round the "three days." Passion week is but a minor chord in the prelude to the great Easter anthem, which ends with the Ascension. In Art we have to take the shade with the light —indeed, without shadow we can have no light. Good Friday and Easter Day together are like one of Rembrandt's etchings—the blackness of Erebus, pierced by a shaft from Heaven. It is by virtue of this that Easter arrests and holds the imagination of the artist. For between the extreme light and the extreme dark there is room for every degree of shade and tender colour. It is as though the whole *dramatis personæ* of the Divine tragedy moved upon the stage at once. The Mother is there, as she was at Christmas. But she is a little aged now, and has learned the meaning of the strange words, that a sword should pierce through her own soul also. The angels are there—not singing the babe to rest, but strengthening the man for suffering. The twelve are there—let the painter think for a moment of those twelve faces, and differentiate them from each other in his mind—the beloved disciple, the impetuous Peter, the "one which was a devil." The Magdalen is there—the priests, the thieves, the soldiers, the people.

But the great Easter figure, no doubt, is that of Christ. How shall that be painted? How is it that when we speak of Christ the same form arises

before the minds of us all, as if we knew Him, or, at least, had seen Him in our dreams? How is it that if one should draw for us a face, we should be able to say whether we recognised it as that of the Master?

That the fact is so is beyond dispute. The face of Christ is known in our midst. And we have done strange things with it. In France, for instance, it was removed from the high altar of Nôtre Dame, and its place taken by the beautiful Madame Maillard, as the personification of the Deity. In England, with a different sense of propriety, we wrenched it down from the west front of one of the loveliest of our cathedrals, and put up in its stead a bust of George the Third. But these things are not to be laid to the charge of Art. It is not Art—but rather the negation of Art—that blasphemes. Let us turn from the iconoclast to the artist.

Think then of any of the great Easter pictures with which the mind is stored. They may be by men of different nationalities, men endued with widely different traditions of Art. The "Ecce Homo" in our National Gallery is a head only; but, apart from all consideration of style, or quality, or merit, or demerit in the work itself, nobody who has lived in Christendom looking upon that picture, could question for whom it was intended. Criticise it as much as you like, object to its

tenderness, say that the mouth is weak, the hair effeminate; that only makes the thing the more curious—because if you look into your own mind you will see that unconsciously you attribute all its faults to the painter, while the type, in its strength and nobility, remains as *the* Likeness which you recognise as that which the painter ought to have realised more perfectly. Or think of two other well-known paintings—one, the supreme moment of Christ's earthly triumph, His entry into Jerusalem amidst the plaudits of the multitude—the other, the lifting of His lifeless body from the cross, with torn hands and pierced side. There could be no greater contrast than these two subjects, and yet there is again no doubt as to the Likeness of the man in each. Nor would it be conceivable to us that the painter should have given Christ's face another form, or have used that Likeness for a different person.

Observe also the contrast between the two artists. The painter of the "Descent from the Cross," which hangs in the cathedral of Antwerp, was Rubens,—a German, trained in the Flemish school, but visiting Venice and Rome, and coming in his early life under the immediate influence of Titian. The painter of the "Entry into Jerusalem,"—which is one of the famous mural decorations in the church of St. Germain des Prés—was Hippolyte Flandrin, a Frenchman, trained in what

M. Taine calls "the great pagan school" of France. When Rubens painted in Antwerp, the cries of the martyrs of the Reformation were still ringing through the century. He may have made studies for the faces of lost souls in purgatory from the faces he had himself seen wreathed in flames. When Flandrin painted in St. Germain des Prés, hearing the traffic of the streets of Paris, which in a cathedral sounds like distant thunder, he might have mistaken it for the rolling of the guillotine or the rattle of musketry of a revolution. In either case it was a time when the painter might well pause and wonder how long there would be any altar-pieces to paint, or churches to decorate. But the sun may go down in blood—or hidden by clouds may seem to have no setting—and yet next morning it will rise fair and bright in the heavens. And so the great Easter festival comes round, and the Church calls to her sons, and Rubens answers with his "Descent from the Cross," and Flandrin answers with his "Entry of Christ into Jerusalem."

And we have seen that their answer is the same, so far as it touches the Likeness of the chief figure. And if instead of these two men we had taken painters of all schools, and of all ages, and of all countries, still the answer would have been the same. Cimabue, Giotto, and Fra Angelico, Raphael, Titian, Tintoretto, Correggio, Da Vinci,

Veronese, Dürer, Holbein, Memling, Murillo, and the rest, have but one conception of Christ's face. Varying as they do in their infinite changes of style, and force, and choice of subject, and method of handling, yet they all observe the same type—because they all take it from a tradition that they received, but did not invent—one that they accept as higher and truer than anything they could themselves create.

But these great painters of the Renascence succeeded to a time when there were no great painters—when Art was dead, and had been dead for a thousand years—and for the matter of that, buried too, with the beautiful statues of ancient Greece. There were, indeed, workers in mosaic, and metal, and glass, who made ornaments for the churches; but these men wrought on narrow lines of thought, and knew nothing of the imagination of a Fra Angelico, a Titian, or a Raphael. Here, then, is a strange thing. Art is re-born—the classic statues are discovered, imagination is set free to revel in every conceivable form of beauty and splendour and passion of life. And yet the greatest painters of the world take up this old tradition of the mosaic and metal workers of the dark ages, and cannot invent for themselves anything more divine, more worthy to represent the face of Him who is to be for ever the Sun of their Easter.

This general consensus of the great painters in

their treatment of the Likeness of Christ is all the more remarkable from the fact that there is no parallel to it in their treatment of other characters included in the sacred narrative. Of S. Paul, indeed, and S. Peter, and S. John, there are, as we have seen, portraits of which the authenticity can scarcely be questioned; but they are very slight. For the Mother of Christ there is not so much as this. There is not only no likeness, there is not even a recognised type. Raphael, who was so careful to follow the earliest records of the likenesses of the Apostles, found no such inspiration for his drawings of the Blessed Virgin. The most beautiful of his Madonnas, the "Madonna di San Sisto," now in the Dresden gallery, is said to have been painted as the portrait of a lady who died in child-birth. It is from that picture of mother and child, perhaps the loveliest picture in the world, that Raphael was named "the divine." But Raphael's Madonna's are always Italian ladies; and in like manner the artists of France and Spain, and Germany found their highest inspiration of feminine beauty in the faces of their own countrywomen. Their paintings claim to be no more than the artist's conception of what the "Mater Dolorosa" might have been.

But there is another thought that arises in the mind in thinking of these Easter pictures, viz., the influence upon Art of the learning that comes,

first, from the study of Art itself; and second, from the accumulated results of modern research. Looking at the work of Rubens, we may say that the art of painting, as an art, could no further go. The consummate mastery of effect—in composition, in line, in light and shade—astonishes and delights. See how these figures are grouped, so that every incident, whether of the most violent strain of action, as in the case of the young man bearing the chief weight of the body, or the pathetic lifting up of the hands of the mother to her dead son, or the drooping of the lifeless limbs of the Saviour of the world, shall each contribute, not only to tell the story, but to emphasize the line of beauty, and give a sense of strength and repose to the picture. Observe how the light is flashed upon the pallid side—not the side where the wound is, that would be too terrible—and then on the still whiter linen, so that the painter shall have scope to render the death pallor with the more realistic fidelity. That is art—consummate art—from the painter's point of view. For the rest, it does not matter to Rubens that the real cross was not the shape he has drawn it—that the Maries were not Dutchwomen, and did not dress in the garments of his daughters. The learning of the school of Rubens comes, not from the world *outside* the studio, but from handling the brush *in* the studio. But the learning displayed

by the more modern school is of a different kind. The painter now must paint the real scene—the real city, the very breed of ass on which Christ rode, the very palms the people carried, the very garments they strewed in the way. How far this modern requirement strengthens or weakens Art is a great and difficult question. It strengthens it by adding to its resources, but it weakens it by expending part of its resources in a new direction. There is a degree of historical and topographical knowledge that is no doubt essential to the grave representation of religious subjects, and some will hold that Rubens attained it. At any rate his knowledge of these things carried him considerably further than some of the old German painters, who, conscious of their power of painting pots and pans, painted pots and pans as though pots and pans were the first and last aim of Art. From such an ultima ratio in Art we turn with thankfulness to the reverential observance of the unities of time and place. But no amount of learning displayed in the unities of time and place will satisfy us if the essential element of Art is missing. For, to the artist, time and place are but accessories. The passion of Art is in the life—the life of Art is in the passion. The sunlight that falls on the dead Christ at Jerusalem is the same that falls on the models in Rubens' studio at Antwerp. Tears and blood are very much alike, east and west. And

just as it would still be Easter, though St. Germain were laid in ashes, so the artist would still be ready to paint the passion of Christ, though there were no archæologist, or traveller to explain the historical data, or to arrange the *mise-en-scène.*

That is the meaning of the words which stand at the head of this last chapter—Easter in the Studio. Even to the painter of landscape there is an Easter, in the returning sun, after the long darkness of winter. As the days lengthen and the fields put on their beautiful garments, he turns his face towards the growing brightness, and if not through Theology, then perhaps through Science, he traces its source to the same Divine fountain of light. For where there is an Easter, there must be a Sun-God. We cannot eliminate the Sun-God from the moral world, any more than we can blot out the solar light from the sky. The thing we call Religion is an essential element of life; and therefore it is an essential element of Art. We may indeed mistake a mock sun for the real sun; but it is only in the light of some sun that we can live. Like the cave-men we may burrow from it; but its radiance penetrates even to the inmost recesses of our retreat. We may call it the Religion of Humanity—but it is still Religion. Without it Art could have known of no Elysian Fields; the star-lit passage in Charon's boat could

have been purchased by no golden bough; the dead would have asked only for six foot of earth. Without it Christ could have given us nothing to remember, or to hope for, or to forget. Without it the World, and the Flesh, and the Devil, would be all one—and we should be one with them. Without it there would be no Easter in the Studio.

Who then refuses to take part in this great festival? Not the Sculptor—for "See, saith the Lord, I have called him by name, and filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and understanding, and knowledge, to devise cunning works, even cherubims of gold that shall spread out their wings, and cover with their wings—with their faces one towards another." And so the Sculptor is called, and he brings to God—his chisel.

And then the Poet follows; and lo! God touches his lips—and he becomes the "Chief-singer to the Chief-Captain."

And then the Architect. "Send me now a man, cunning to work in brass, and in gold, and in silver, and in iron, and in timber; for the house that I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods." And the man comes—the son of a woman of the daughters of Dan—for the inheritance of Art is generally on the mother's side. The Architect seems to have strayed into a heathen land. There was a great deal of building going

on in Tyre. But the moment the Lord's house is to be built he must be brought back—this son of a woman of the daughters of Dan.

And then the Musician. Ah! these players upon instruments; these singers; these light-hearted minstrels; who won't always play the tune we want; who sulk by the rivers of Babylon. Come now—take down your harps—give us a song now! "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

"How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

I like the splendid loyalty of those words. How shall I sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

So, then, it is the Lord's song—and the Musician is also of the blessed company.

But where is the Painter? Is it not Easter? Does he not hold in his hand the White Rose of the Paradise of God? Have we not seen how he lays at the Master's feet his tribute of love and praise?

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE DISPUTED INHERITANCE

It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer—but when he has gone his way, then he boasteth.

A MAN born and educated in a Christian country is in the position of one who inherits his father's house—a mansion built centuries ago, containing many rooms, in the chief of which, and occupying the place of honour, hangs a beautiful picture, which from his childhood he has believed to be the portrait of the founder of his family. This portrait is an heirloom of priceless value, and goes with the title-deeds of the estate.

But a day comes when the man finds that he has outgrown his estate, or his inheritance is disputed. The house is appraised—and with it the portrait. Then arises the question of its authenticity. "It is naught, it is naught, saith the

buyer," as he has always been saying since the days of the wise king. The picture was painted so long ago that nobody living has ever seen the painter, or the face which it represents. Perhaps it was manufactured in Wardour Street for the purpose of giving a semblance of reality to a doubtful pedigree: as they say the Likeness of Christ was made up in the dark ages for the purpose of giving substance to the story of the Divine Life on earth. Perhaps it is the fictitious substitute for an original, long ago lost, or stolen, or sold by the family, or destroyed by fire. It may even be the very painting mentioned in the title-deeds, and yet so decayed by time, or changed by so-called restoration, as to have become worthless as a picture, and unrecognisable as a likeness.

How shall any certainty be attained as to the value, or authenticity, of this portrait? There are so many possibilities of error, of accident, of fraud. Moreover, the questions at issue are too serious and far-reaching to admit of being lightly treated, or suffered to remain undetermined. They affect much more than the intrinsic value of a work of art. If the portrait goes with the estate, the estate goes with the portrait. Both are alike inalienable from the descendants of this man; and the opposition to the title of the heir is keen and persistent.

The following questions are asked, and have to be answered. I place them side by side with similar questions touching the Likeness of Christ. In either case reasonable answers should carry conviction.

I. The tradition of the family—How far is it to be trusted?

The witness of the Church—How far is it to be believed?

II. Portraits, said to be of the same man, are possessed by other branches of the family—Do they bear a common resemblance?

Likenesses, believed to be of Christ, are regarded as authentic by different Churches—Do they bear a common similitude?

III. Were the artists of the period when this man lived capable of painting such a picture?

Were the artists of the first century capable of painting the Likeness of Christ?

IV. Is there any reason to think that the heir had any interest in concealing, or in falsifying this man's likeness?

Is there any reason for supposing that the early Christians desired the face of Christ to be unknown or to be forgotten?

V. Is it a question between this portrait and another—or is it between this and none?

Is it a question between this and some other Likeness—or is it between this and none?

VI. What is the opinion of acknowledged experts in the art of portraiture?

How was the Likeness of Christ regarded by the Masters of the Renascence?

VII. Here is a miniature. It has been hidden away in a secret drawer, and is inscribed with the man's initials—Is it the same Likeness?

Here are some portraits from the graves of the first Christian Martyrs. They are inscribed with Christ's initials—Is the Likeness the same?

VIII. Is there any theory to account for the portrait, except that it is a likeness?

Is there any theory to account for the Likeness, except that it is a portrait?

This then is the position. One of the most precious of the inheritances of the Christian Church has been disputed. "Rex Regum" is in substance the statement of the heir, setting forth his claim: these Illustrations are his cross-examination in open Court. I believe that the claim is just—that the Court is fairly constituted—and that there need be no fear as to the ultimate verdict.

THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH

The witness of the Church—How far is it to be trusted?

IT is quite true, as stated in a masterly analysis of "Rex Regum" which appeared in "The Speaker," that no article of the Creed turns upon the authenticity of the Likeness of our Blessed Lord. But the Church of Christ is not a Creed only. It is the Witness and the Keeper of all the records of the life of Christ on earth, of which the Likeness is one. During nineteen centuries this Likeness has been held steadily before our eyes. Countless millions of Christians, learned and unlearned, have lived and died in its presence; never doubting its truth; never picturing to themselves any other face as the face of their Saviour. Before the people knew the written word they knew the Likeness. It made beautiful to them their sacred places. When through the invention

of printing the people took the Bible to their own homes, they found its pages illuminated with the same Likeness, drawn by the companions of Luther. Through the frescoes of the early Christians, the mosaics of the mediævalists, the woodcuts of the Reformers, the paintings of the Renascence, the Church has always said the same thing—this is He who lived and died for us, and will come again. If it is not He, but another—if the Likeness is not authentic, but an invention of the Dark Ages—then, not only is the use of it misleading, but the credibility of the Church of Christ as a living Witness to Christianity is seriously impugned.

To this statement the Very Reverend the Dean of Canterbury, writing in "The Contemporary Review," takes exception. He says that ninety-nine out of every hundred painters aim only at embodying an idea, not at furnishing a portrait. This is of course quite true, but it misses the point. For the question whether a fictitious likeness is misleading does not depend on the intention of the artist but on the use that is made of it. No one pretends that the modern painter, who places before the public his particular ideal of how the face of Christ should be painted, is guilty of deception. I am not afraid that the readers of "Rex Regum" will be so stupid as to suppose

that any of the pictures I place before them, from Fra Angelico and Giotto, to Fritz von Uhde and Holman Hunt, were painted from the life. There is no deception in modern Art so far as the Likeness is concerned. But the case is very different when a Church, establishing a new worship—the worship of its Founder—in which the belief in His humanity is an essential element, sets forth before men of all sorts and conditions a visible presentment of that Founder, and steadily adheres to it for nearly two thousand years. It is to this constant setting forth and repetition of a fixed type that I apply the word "misleading," if the type is all the while doubtful or fictitious. When the basilicas were first consecrated, who explained to the people that the great mosaic above the triumphal arch was only an imaginary Christ? If that had been proclaimed the people would have torn it from its place. When the Likeness was transmitted from land to land, so that the same Christ might be known everywhere, who informed the converts that it was only an invention of the Dark Ages? When, at the Reformation, Albert Dürer and Lucas Cranach, sturdy Protestants as they were, continued to paint the Likeness—which of them was persuaded that it was only a relic of Papal Rome? If the Likeness of Christ —brought from the graves of the first martyrs—emblazoned on the walls of the basilicas by the

authors of the Nicene Creed—accepted by the Reformers—is not a true Likeness, one of two things is certain. Either the Church of Christ has been a deceiver, or it has been deceived.

I know of no escape from this dilemma. The Dean of Canterbury says that the New Testament writers never pause for a moment to tell us how Christ looked as a man; that there is not the slightest mention in early Christian literature of any relics of Him of any kind; that even the sacred sites came to be completely forgotten; and that we are to this day entirely uncertain as to the locality of places so infinitely sacred as Golgotha, Gethsemane, and the Garden of the Sepulchre. I shall examine the Dean's statement as to the writers of the New Testament in a special Note on "Forgetting Christ." In the meantime it is obvious that the obscurity with regard to the sacred sites, and the silence of the Fathers on the subject of relics, so far from being an argument against the authenticity of the Likeness, tell rather in its favour. The immediate followers of Christ were driven from the holy places, which remained in the possession of their enemies. They could carry the Likeness with them; they could not carry Gethsemane, or the Garden of the Sepulchre. That the Church was not then corrupted by the superstitious use of

relics, illustrates very clearly and forcibly that the affectionate treasuring of the Likeness was as innocent as it was natural.

I note, however, that the "Agnostic Journal" quotes the Dean's argument with warm approval —adding significantly that "it is with pain and reluctance that such damaging facts are wrung from the clergy. In the name of truth," it asks, "in the name of truth, why is everything connected with the early history of Christianity not only tinctured with, but absolutely baptized in forgery and fraud? The Gospel writers, where they depart from Paul's original, disagree with each other in everything. They could not agree even as to the words inscribed on the cross, any more than in the pedigree of their hero."

Is there no sting in the charge? Or is it of so trifling a nature that it may safely be neglected? And yet when I set forth the evidence which demonstrates that at least the early Christian painters committed no forgery or fraud, "The Guardian" gently reproves me for enthusiasm, and "The Church Times" thinks that I overestimate the importance of the question. This indifference on the part of two of the chief representatives of religious thought in the Church of England marks a new phase of ecclesiasticism, and contrasts

curiously with the ardour of the earlier Churches. In the days of the Fathers it was not left to an artist to determine either the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ, or the use that should be made of it. These things were settled by the Fathers themselves: and a well-attested portrait would be enshrined in a basilica, that it might be preserved for ever. In what we call the "Dark Ages" one town would declare war against another for daring to vary the authentic form. Ferento was actually destroyed by the citizens of Viterbo because it contained a picture representing Christ with open eyes, that being contrary to the traditional form in which they had received it. How easy it is for us to smile at this! Of course the opening or the closing of the eyes does not affect the question of the similitude. But the incident shows the reverence with which the Likeness was regarded, and the fierce determination with which any attempt to alter it was resisted. I do not wish to bring back the fierceness nor the intolerance; but I do regret that it should be considered of small import whether the Church of Christ has held for centuries, and still holds in its right hand a truth or a lie.

I take the Church of Christ then as my first witness; and, believing it to be trustworthy, I say that the Likeness of Christ must stand or fall

with Christianity. "The Guardian" considers this to be an extravagant hope. But why? By the Church I mean that Holy Church throughout all the World which acknowledges Christ. By Christianity I mean the Faith to which that Church bears witness in its creeds. By the Likeness I mean the face to which the Church bears witness in its practice. If it can be shown that the Church is not to be trusted as a witness, it is not our belief in the Likeness only that will suffer. The Likeness, however, is as safe as a signet on the hand of the King. Only the King himself can pluck it thence.

THE UNITY OF THE LIKENESS

Portraits—said to be of our Lord—are regarded as authentic by different Churches: Do they bear a common similitude?

WHAT then is the nature of the testimony given by the Church with regard to the Likeness of Christ? The Church has witnessed, first of all, that it is not good to rob ourselves of the evidence which Art gives to the perfect humanity of our Lord. This is finely expressed by the Rev. W. Garrett Horder, in a review which appeared in "The Independent," a Non-conformist journal. "To have a Christ of whose features we can form no conception is to miss the influence of the fact that the Word was made flesh. For surely He was made flesh not for one age only, but for all ages."

This, however, does not imply that in any one picture we can find the complete truth. The Church has never committed itself to one example

as possessing supernatural authority. It has recognised that the witness of Art is human, not divine, and that it is to be taken with the human element of defect. "The Times" admits the continuity of the type from the days of the earliest mosaics, and thus yields to nine-tenths of my argument. "The Saturday Review" considers the unity perceptible enough; and defines it as a unity in the midst of great diversity; taking exception, however, to the word "recognition" as implying "pre-cognition," and suggesting that while an Apostle might have "recognised" the Likeness, we can only "accept" it. Surely this is playing with words. Unless, indeed, it is a device by which the Reviewer can review without committing himself, it is another Nero fiddling while Rome burns. "The St. James's Gazette" says that there is a marked general resemblance, though one criticism applies to them all, viz., the face is not that of a Jew. This criticism, however, is met by the "Morning Post," which affirms that they all agree in showing a fine, intellectual, and sympathetic type of the Hebrew countenance. "The Outlook" observes that although, coming from the hands of Greek and Latin artists, they have their characteristic peculiarities, the underlying Likeness is persistent. "The Westminster Gazette" remarks that on this question the verdict of the artist must

be set against the conclusion of the theologian, and that Sir Wyke Bayliss has the best of the argument. "The Daily News" says that the temptation amongst the artists of the time to make Christ as fair as Dionysus must have been strong, —could have been overcome, indeed, only by the belief in our Lord's divinity—and that all considerations make in favour of a genuine tradition. "The Birmingham Gazette" says there is no Likeness in the world better known than that of Christ.

With these general statements more than a hundred Reviewers expressly concur: though a few critics, notably in "The Daily Telegraph" and "The Manchester Guardian," lament that the artists of the period were not better painters; that they had not the touch of the Greek sculptors, or the genius of Reynolds. "The Daily Chronicle" says that probably there is no one living in any civilised country, with any degree of education, who does not know the traditional face of Christ. In picture or in image, all recognise those accepted features, the gentle inclination of the head, the sad composure of eyes and mouth, the gracious kingliness and sweetness, the look of authority and yet of infinite submission. "The Standard" says that the illustrations show that painters so absolutely unlike each other as Bellini and Cranach, Rembrandt and Vandyke came within

sight, almost within touch, in their unquestioning acceptance of a common traditional type for the Likeness of our Lord. "The Daily Telegraph" observes the unanimity prevailing amongst the earliest draughtsmen, whether in paintings done in secret within the tombs of the martyrs, or in mosaics worked in an unsympathetic material. "Anybody," it says, "turning the pages of 'Rex Regum' will perceive that Bellini, Matsys, and many more besides, were content to copy the mosaics of the basilicas—as Van Eyck and Michael Angelo followed the Veronicas. In a word, that the studio was controlled by the traditions of the Church."

And now a strange thing happens. In the midst of this recondite discussion, while I am recording these testimonies to the Unity of the Likeness, a child's voice is heard. The chief of one of our leading provincial newspapers writes to me: "I showed 'Rex Regum' to my little girl, aged three, and pointed to the earliest likeness. She identified it at once as 'Gentle Jesus,' and on turning to a decidedly dissimilar portrait, that also she at once recognised. I don't think the child had seen many religious pictures, and I was surprised at the instant perception." It seems then that as with nations, so with the little children, we look upon Christ's face before we

are able to read His words. It is only "The Inquirer," a Unitarian review, that does not seem to know what we are talking about when we speak of "the Likeness," but following an anonymous writer in "The Guardian," who follows Mrs. Jameson, declares that there is no likeness. "O sancta simplicitas!" exclaims "The Inquirer," "O sancta simplicitas! If by some miracle a portrait could have been preserved in the catacombs it does not exist now—the Likeness as we know it to-day turns wholly on the arrangement of the hair and beard."

"If by some miracle!" Is it then a miracle in the eyes of "The Inquirer" for the portrait of a man to be preserved? The Reviewer expresses no surprise at the greater miracle, as it would surely be, for the Likeness of one so dear to the human race to be lost, if indeed it is lost. Let us examine the objection, however, on its own merits.

And first. It is quite true that Mrs. Jameson, a generation ago, gave it as her opinion that we have no authentic Likeness of our Blessed Lord; and I, for one, being a lad and not knowing any better, believed her, and was sorry. But it never occurred to me even then, that the opinion of this lady amateur closed the matter, or should be considered binding upon artists for ever, or ought to bar original research. On the contrary, I began

at once, and have continued ever since, the study of the subject, with the result set forth in "Rex Regum."

The moment we trust ourselves to think independently of Mrs. Jameson we perceive that, delightful as she is as a dilettante, she knew very little about the ancient Likenesses. Her opinions were formed mainly on the study of the schools of the Renascence. She never saw the S. Prassede likeness attributed to S. Peter, nor the painting attributed to S. Luke, nor the Veronica of S. Peter's. Had she seen them she would have perceived that so far from the likeness depending on the arrangement of the hair, none of these show any hair at all. The S. Prassede and the Vatican portraits are inclosed in jewelled frames, which entirely conceal the hair, while the Veronica is a face-cloth from the grave of one of the first martyrs, on which the features only, without a line of the hair, appear to have been drawn.

But that is not all. The Likeness is not only persistent where there is no hair, but it is equally persistent throughout a long series of examples in which the hair and beard take almost every form and arrangement that can be imagined. In the Greek icons there is a lock of hair falling on the forehead; in the Latin pictures the hair is divided smoothly in an arch. In the antique

mosaic the face is in profile, and the hair is folded back behind the ear, the ear itself being carefully drawn; in the antique fresco, also seen in profile, the hair quite covers the ear. In the Veronica of S. Silvestro the hair is short, reaching only to the level of the mouth; in the Veronica at Genoa it is very long, falling down upon the shoulders. Yet in all these the Likeness of Christ remains the same.

But if the Likeness does not depend upon the hair, which in the most striking of the ancient examples does not exist, neither does it depend upon the beard, which takes almost every form which a beard can take: divided, pointed, rounded, long, short, covering the lower portion of the face, leaving the lower portion of the face uncovered. This is true both of the ancient and of the modern likenesses. If the Reader will turn to Plates IX., X., XI. and XV., he will see that in the fresco the beard is sharply divided; that in the enamel it is not divided but pointed, and that it covers the chin to the lip; that in the mosaic it is long, and leaves the chin quite bare; that in the Veronica it is again divided, and short. If he will then pass from these to the long series of examples from Plate XX. to Plate XL., he will see that from Giotto to Velasquez the same unity of Likeness is preserved, with the same di-

versity in the arrangement of the hair and beard. Angelico, Van Eyck, and Michael Angelo paint the beard as divided; Orcagna, Cranach, Rembrandt paint it as pointed; Bellini, Titian, and Matsys show it as rounded; Da Vinci and Luini show no beard at all. And yet in all these the Likeness is not to be mistaken.

I think therefore that I may claim it as an established fact that the thing about which I am writing —the Likeness of Christ—exists; even though it appears to be unknown to "The Inquirer," or to the correspondent of "The Guardian." The existence is proved by the unity. But the unity proves more than the existence. It proves that the many likenesses which are the same Likeness, are not the sporadic growth of unassisted imaginations, but are variants of a common form, dating from a very early period, which must have received the sanction of an authority strong enough to make itself felt throughout Christendom. Whether that early form is the true form must be determined by another line of investigation.

ART IN THE TIME OF CHRIST

Were the artists of the first century capable of painting the Likeness of Christ?

THE critic of the "Daily Graphic" raises a curious and unexpected objection. He admits that these representations of Christ are Roman, and that they date from the second century. But he says that they are rude and diagrammatic; that the question turns on the qualifications of the artists of the period; and that while we know what the Cæsars were like by reason of the consummate art of their portraitists, we know not what Christ was like because the art of the period was primitive, and primitive art is not to be taken seriously. To such criticism reply seems scarcely necessary. It cannot mislead anybody who knows when Christ lived; when the Cæsars reigned; and that during that period art was not primitive, but decadent.

And yet when a Reviewer in one of our lead-

ing newspapers asserts gravely that we have no Likeness of Christ because the artists of the period were incapable of painting a reliable portrait, it is not safe to assume that the ordinary reader is better informed than the critic as to the condition of the Fine Arts in the first century. I must restate therefore what I should have supposed was common knowledge.

Christ was born in the Augustan age. The second Cæsar, having conquered the world, declared a universal peace, and closed the temple of Janus that very year. For a little while then, and just at this period, there came a revival of the Arts, which had seemed crushed out by the devastating tread of armies before the final conquest of Greece by Rome. Augustus was himself distinguished for learning and taste. Virgil and Horace were amongst his friends. It was his boast that he had found Rome brick, and had left it marble. He died when our Lord was about ten years of age; but Tiberias, who reigned during the remainder of our Lord's time on earth, carried on the traditions of the Empire as regards learning and the Fine Arts.

Now what were these traditions? The Romans, as a race, never had any initiative in the Fine Arts. They came into the inheritance of the Greeks; but they were not to the manner born.

It was a Roman general, for instance, who in despoiling Corinth of its treasures, told his soldiers that if they broke any of the statues he would require them to make new ones. Nevertheless, the Empire was not without its artists. While the Apostles were evangelising Rome, Greek sculptors were adorning it with statuary. The famous group of Laocöon and his sons in the toils of the serpents was sculptured by Polydorus at the very time when S. Peter, S. Paul, and S. John were preaching in the catacombs.

But the art of the period was exercised within well-defined limits. The imaginative faculty, which had been the crown and glory of Greek art, seemed to have been altogether lost. There was one phase of art, and one only, which the Romans practised with any marked success—and that was portraiture. Considering themselves the masters of the world; interested in every action that affected their Empire, or their polity, they were students of men rather than of ideas; and to them Art, in the form of portraiture, presented special attractions. Wealthy citizens decorated their houses and galleries with collections of portraits of men and women of note, or whose names were associated with passing events. If ever there was a period when Rome possessed consummate portraitists it was when the face of

Christ was first being painted. Christ came at the very time when the world was specially prepared to receive and record its impressions of the aspect of His human nature.

See, then, how the argument recoils upon the critic. Roman art was at its highest in the time of Christ and His Apostles. In the second and third centuries it deteriorated, and in the fourth, became practically extinct. But the fourth century is the very time when, according to this critic, the Likeness was invented. That is to say, the noblest conception which has ever been placed upon canvas—that has controlled the imagination of the greatest painters of the world; that has satisfied ecclesiastic and artist alike, was the invention of a people fast sinking into barbarism, whose artists had even forgotten the use of the painter's brush.

Still pursuing the question of the possibility of direct portraiture, "The Daily News" says, in a leading article, that these very early Christian likenesses of our Lord were probably designed from descriptions of living witnesses; that any converted terra-cotta worker, or vase painter, or glass worker, or gem engraver, could do this. But this is missing the point; which is, not that these likenesses were made *by* men who had seen Christ—though there is no reason to doubt that—

but that they were made *for* men who had seen Christ, and knew Him well, and would not have accepted them unless they had been true. "The Birmingham Gazette" says, that unless a portrait of our Lord had been taken during His life we cannot conceive that any remembrance of Him, however tender and affectionate, could possibly direct an artist in delineating His beloved features. But that is ignoring the common fact that many of the most striking likenesses are made wholly from memory. Our great English sculptor, Gibson, worked habitually not from sight, but in the absence of his model. "The Manchester Guardian" objects that these early likenesses are so slight; but that is forgetting that some of them are the size of life, and painted with a mastery of technique, and completeness of realisation worthy of the portrait painters of the Augustan age. Our knowledge of the Likeness is not derived from the glass relics: they only serve as pointers to tell us which are the true likenesses amongst the frescoes on the walls and the face cloths from the graves. "The Saturday Review" admits that I have made out a strong case of probability. Can we say more of other historical records of our Faith? "The Independent" considers that in "Rex Regum" the probability grows almost to certainty. "The Scotsman" says, the naked eye of a plain observer cannot but listen (*sic*) to

the suggestion that they are not all representations of the same man. I know not how an eye, naked or otherwise, can "listen." But it is too much to expect of art that every likeness under every circumstance shall be equally like. The examples I have selected illustrate the variations as well as the unity of the Likeness. "The Morning Post" compares these early records to their disadvantage with the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds. But the question is not whether they are fine works of art. If they were accepted by the Apostles they may well be accepted by us. "The Speaker" considers my conclusion bold—but confirms it in a very powerful article full of close reasoning. "The Standard" says that my argument is cogent. "The Daily Telegraph" would have preferred one likeness, and one only. But that is the same as asking for one Gospel, and one only, of which there shall be no various readings. "The Guardian" considers these ancient relics too precarious to allow of much being built upon them. But that is the same as taking a single wheel out of a watch and complaining that it won't go.

FORGETTING CHRIST

Is there any reason to suppose that the Apostles desired the face of Christ to be unknown or forgotten?

THE theory, therefore, that we have no Likeness of Christ, because the artists of the period were incapable of painting it breaks down. Will the theory that we have no Likeness because they were unwilling to paint it, stand its ground any better?

It is quite certain that the Apostles must have been aware of the practice of portraiture which was common amongst the people with whom they lived. They must have known of the custom of the artists of their own time of making sketches of people of note, in the hope of selling to collectors while the person was still living, or in the event of his death of obtaining commissions to paint them as decorations of his mausoleum. Where are S. Paul's or S. John's words of warning against this practice in the case of Christ? It

is not as though the question had never been raised in their time. Think of that scene at Ephesus, when Demetrius, the maker of silver images, assailed S. Paul for saying, "they be no gods which are made with hands"; when Alexander, who afterwards did so much mischief, attempted his feeble defence, and all the people with one voice for about the space of two hours cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Then was a time for S. Paul to speak: "but the Disciples suffered him not." If he had anything to say, however, against the lawfulness of the portraiture of Christ, the Disciples could not have prevented him from saying it in his Epistles. Or think of our own times. A city is decimated by plague. Outside its walls trenches have been digged, in which to bury the dead. These are soon filled. The dead begin to encroach upon the living. One day—a day never to be forgotten—a spade strikes against a piece of stone, in the ancient foundations. It is an image—of whom, or by whom made, does not matter. That very day the plague abates. The image is carried to the cathedral, and the people worship it as a Black Christ. Against thus "ignorantly worshipping" S. Paul duly warns us. He does not warn us against the Likeness. Perhaps if the people had known the face of Christ better, they would not have turned to

another. But S. Paul does not correct ignorance by ignorance. His Epistles are—like the Gospels—full of references to the personal aspect of the man Christ Jesus. Christ is described as growing in stature and favour. His look is sufficient to break the heart of Peter—to send the rich man away sorrowing—to make the soldiers flinch from their bloody task. S. Paul contrasts the freedom with which they could look on the face of Christ, with the veiling of the face of Moses. S. John dwells on the beauty of the Redeemer, whose face was full of grace and truth. He could not forget that he had leaned on the Master's breast. To him Christ was one whom he had seen with his eyes, and his hands had handled. The reference seems to be to that pathetic incident when one of the twelve had doubted, and said he would not believe unless he could put his fingers into the print of the nails—and Christ had replied, "handle me and see."

But no! The Dean of Canterbury shakes his head. He says that these men preserved no memory of the face they had loved, because they believed it was expedient He should go away. But why was it expedient that He should go away? Surely not in order that they might forget Him: but, on the contrary, because He would send to them the Comforter, who should bring all

things to their remembrance. The Dean admits expressly that portraiture was common in the days of the Apostles; that the likenesses of other men were preserved; that antecedent probabilities would have pointed to some attempt having been made to preserve His features; that we should not have expected that Christians would so completely lose every vestige of tradition of the human form of Him whom they so passionately loved and adored as the Lord of life and the world. The Dean admits all this, but still thinks that the Disciples soon forgot what Christ was like; that they could think of Him only as the Invisible God, or as a White Lamb; and that the Paraclete brought to their remembrance everything concerning Him except the knowledge of His face. And this, the Dean says, is easily explained.

The Dean's explanation is as astounding as his conclusion. It takes a threefold form. The first is, that the Jewish disciples would have considered any picture to be a violation of the second commandment. Does the Dean quite realise that these likenesses of the first century were made by Roman artists for Romans? and not by Jews, or for Jews at all. If the antecedent prejudice of the Jew counts for anything amongst the Jews, the antecedent prejudices of the Roman must

count for as much amongst the Romans. It is a little hard to expect that the Roman converts should have precipitately adopted the traditions of a people they hated and despised, and have voluntarily bound themselves by rules they knew only to contemn, and which they supposed the religion of Christ had superseded or overthrown. To the Romans it was a matter of course to make portraits of their heroes, and ideal representations of their gods. That they made portraits of S. Peter, and S. Paul, and S. John is certain; and that these portraits were grouped with the figure of our Blessed Lord is equally certain. Nobody has ever questioned, or can question the fact that these things exist. We have seen that the writings of the Apostles are silent upon the subject; that it is not till the second or the third century that any of the Fathers objected to the Likeness at all. The Dean's argument proves too much. It is a denial that the Likeness ever existed, because after it had existed for more than a hundred years an unsuccessful attempt was made to suppress it.

The Dean's second argument is that "the first generation of Christians had no altars—they lived in the constant, vivid sense of Christ's immediate though unseen presence." I accept the Dean's statement, but not his inference. The first genera-

tion of Christians had no altars. They gloried in the taunt that they had no altars. They were therefore so much the more free to treasure the Likeness of the Master without suspicion of evil. Demetrius and Alexander could make no shrines for them either of silver or copper. It was when the altars came that the danger came. The Likeness of Christ, their friend, their Master, their Lord, whom they had seen with their eyes—why should they not treasure it? Not until the next century was the difficulty so much as perceived. To meet in a guest-chamber and partake of bread and wine in remembrance of Him, with His Likeness looking down on them was one thing: to offer incense to an image on an altar was a very different matter—and the Fathers protested. The Dean says that it is a strange thing for a writer in the nineteenth century to differ from the Fathers on so elementary a question. But, is the question so elementary? Is it strange for an artist to differ from a theologian? Do I really differ at all? The Fathers protested. But their protest was not against the authenticity of the Likeness. It was on account of the incompleteness. "Look," they said, "you cannot learn what Christ was like by kneeling before an image. The image at the best can only show the human form, the aspect of His humiliation; when He took upon Himself the shape of a servant. If

you would know Christ and see Him as He is, you must turn from pictures painted by men to the presentment of Him in the written word. Art is so poor a thing, that a thousand painters copying from the same original, will give you a thousand variations of the face of Christ, of which you cannot affirm of any one that it is the absolute and complete truth, even as representing His manhood. But in the Gospels you shall see more than His manhood. The pure in heart shall see God." Now that is precisely what I say in "Rex Regum."

Let us turn to the Dean's final contention. It is that "for the whole of the first century at least, the followers of Christ lived in the constant expectation of His immediate return." How differently the same facts appeal to different minds. To me the Dean's statement, which I accept as true, is a very cogent argument in favour of the authenticity of the Likeness. It is to me inconceivable that men who daily expected the coming of the Lord should have had no idea, and have sought for no information as to what He would be like when He appeared. To those who had never seen Him, and those who had known Him, alike, the question was of vital moment. Suppose He should appear to-morrow, in the Coliseum—in the Coliseum Vespasian had just built as an

arena where the Christians should be cast to the wild beasts. Suppose that He should come in the sight of the eighty thousand spectators. Suppose that His beloved should be caught up to meet Him; or that He should shut the mouths of the lions; or that the book should be opened for judgment. Peter would know Him; John would know him; even Paul would recognise the face he had seen on his way to Damascus. But the brethren? Can we believe that there was one of them who having listened to Paul's teaching never asked Paul what the Master was like? to whom they owed allegiance, for whom they were ready to die, to whom they looked as their Redeemer, pledged to come to them in their sore trial and take them to Himself. But what if He should come "as a thief in the night," when they were alone, these poor hunted Christians who had never seen Him themselves, but trusted in Him, nevertheless? What if He should come when they were hiding in the catacombs, and there was no Paul, or Peter, or John, to say "this is the Lord." In "Rex Regum" I show that in considering this question we have to deal not only with the archæologia, but with the humanities of the subject; something more, that is, than can be found in the glass cases of a museum. The glass cases shall be examined too, presently, in another note: but in the meantime I believe it is

impossible for the Apostles to have forgotten the face of Christ, or for the Christians of the first century to have been indifferent to the question of the authenticity of the Likeness.

For upon what else did they base their belief in the resurrection. The Dean's theory would smash S. Paul's argument altogether. How careful S. Paul is, and exact—as if anticipating such an objection—"He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve." Ah, but Cephas was an enthusiast, and the Twelve were not scientific observers! Moreover they may have had their reasons for believing. Very well, then, says S. Paul, "He was seen of more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this day, but some are fallen asleep." "But," says an inquirer, "tell us now, Paul, can you dare to affirm that you ever saw Him yourself?" And S. Paul answers with the humble and beautiful words which ring through the centuries—"Last of all He was seen of me also."

Is it a question between this Likeness and another? or is it between this and none?

WE perceive, then, that the front of the battle is changed. The theory of the Agnostic is that the Likeness could have been preserved by a miracle only—that miracles do not happen—and that therefore we have no Likeness. The theory of the Dean is that although in the ordinary course of nature it is impossible that the earthly aspect of our Lord should have been forgotten by His immediate followers, yet, through some occult influence of the Holy Spirit, they did forget it completely. The two theories are mutually destructive. The one is based on a denial of miracle altogether, the other invokes miracle, but for what a purpose! For the purpose of obliterating a true and vital record of the life of Christ, and setting up in its place a fictitious substitute, as misleading as it is imaginary.

Now we know that to paint a portrait does not require a miracle; and that to treasure it because it is the likeness of one dear to us is in accordance with the best instincts of our nature. Any appeal to miracle is therefore unnecessary. But the Nemesis of an unnecessary appeal to miracle is that one's argument can be maintained only by a miracle. See, then, the Avernus to which the appeal leads. The Dean, apparently unconscious of the descent, traces step by step the abandonment of the real Likeness for the ideal. First there is the miracle of oblivion—the face of Christ is forgotten by the Disciples. Then—and, it is curious to note, not till then—arises the passionate desire to paint the forgotten face. With this desire comes the evolution of an ideal Christ. He is depicted as majestic, triumphant, beardless, beautiful, youthful, almost boyish. The Dean stops there—I think a little arbitrarily. With him it is not a question of truth, it is a question of preference. He has rejected the real Likeness because it represents our Lord as a man of sorrows. He prefers a more cheerful aspect. He is not content to know Christ only as an infant in His mother's arms. He prefers to see Christ represented as a "Radiant Youth." The youthful Christ is, he says, the Divine Christ.

Such preferences are not to be met either by appeal to miracle or by argument. Why should

the theologian assume this difference between Literature and Art — that the scholar always deals with facts, and the artist with fiction?— that one who writes the Life of Christ cares only for truth—not imagining, but recording— not telling the story as he would have wished it to have happened, but as he has received it on authority — while one who paints the face of Christ cares nothing for the truth, and records nothing but the play of his own imagination? The assumption is in either case unfounded. Art and Literature are alike qualified and free to tell the truth—each in its own way. That the early Christians had the means of obtaining and preserving the true Likeness I have proved. That they would prefer the true to the false I can only believe. The Dean objects to my belief on the very grounds which to my mind give it the greatest force. How can such differences be reconciled? I can do no more than state them. To me the constant expectation of the return of the Redeemer in His own human personality seems to involve of necessity the desire to know what He was like. To the Dean it seems otherwise: Christ's life on earth, he reminds us, was a thing of the past, it would be time enough to ask what He was like when He came. To me it seems impossible that men who had lived with Christ, and heard Him speak, and seen Him

suffer, and borne witness to His resurrection, should forget His face. To the Dean it seems quite natural that they should think of Him only as the Invisible God, or as a White Lamb. To me it appears that the making of a fictitious image would come perilously near to a violation of the second commandment. To the Dean it appears to be a violation only if the Likeness be true; and that safety lies in representing Christ as a Radiant Youth. I cannot understand the Dean's mind any more than he understands mine. A Radiant Youth? That is a form well known to these early converts in Rome. It is the form of Dionysus! I do not think S. Paul would have accepted it as a representation of our Lord.

It came to be accepted afterwards, no doubt; but not until the first generation of Christians had passed away. When the time came that no one living had seen Christ; when persecution pressed so hardly on His followers that S. Clement urged them to adopt symbols; then, and not till then, did they turn to the painting of an imaginary Christ. All this is very fully explained in the chapter on the conventional type.

ANGELO AND THE VERONICA

What was the verdict of the great Masters of the Renascence?

IT is curious and interesting to note the various points at which different minds find the crux of the question. The Reviewer of "The Guardian" finds it in some supposed difficulty of establishing a connection between the Christ of modern painters and the Christ of the mosaics of the basilicas: and still more in penetrating the obscurity of the catacombs. It is of course to remove these difficulties that "Rex Regum" is written.

The Reviewer admits that the first is not insuperable. He gives his argument away absolutely when he says, "It is not merely fanciful to detect a resemblance between the 'Rex Regum' of Van Eyck, which gives its name to the volume, and the solemn figure in sixth century mosaic which looks down from the apse of the church of SS. Cosmo è Damiano in Rome." He might,

however, have gone much further in his admissions. He might have pointed out that in "Rex Regum" there are two likenesses of Christ almost identical. One of them is the ancient Veronica of S. Silvestro (Plate XV); the other is an unfinished painting (Plate XXV) by Michael Angelo. Can a closer connection between the ancient and modern likenesses be imagined than this. Looking at them together it is impossible to doubt the source of Michael Angelo's inspiration. He has followed the Veronica line for line. A tracing of his picture superimposed on the Veronica is indistinguishable from a tracing of the Veronica itself.

I lay great stress upon this because Michael Angelo was not a man to follow humbly in the wake of other men. He had a mind of his own, and was not afraid to exercise his imagination, as we see in his attempt to paint "The Last Judgment," where Christ is represented as the Avenger. Nor was his adoption of the likeness of the Veronica an acknowledgment that the painter of it was a master greater than himself. And yet when he paints Christ in the body of His humiliation, dead, entombed, he paints a face which can hardly be distinguished from an old relic of this too much despised early Christian Art. Need I say more to establish the connection which the Reviewer finds it so difficult to perceive? not only

between the Art of the sixth century and the sixteenth, but between both these periods and the earliest representations in the catacombs. Just think of it. Michael Angelo, searching for the Likeness of Christ, finds it at last, not in the splendid visions of his imagination, but in a rude drawing by an unknown artist, on a face-cloth taken from the grave of one of the first martyrs.

It would serve no useful purpose to pursue all the fantasies with which the Likeness has been assailed. For the most part they destroy each other. A correspondent of "The Guardian" declares that the painting attributed to S. Luke is a face of hideous stare; that the Veronica of S. Peter's is the face of a repulsive old man; and that the S. Prassede Likeness has no features at all. Michael Angelo thought differently. But in the second century a famous Epicurean philosopher taunted the Christians, in almost the same words, with the ugliness of their Christ. He had never himself seen Christ. No doubt he had been looking at these very pictures.

S. PAUL AND HIS FRIENDS

Here are some fragments of engraved glass from the graves of the first Christian Martyrs. They bear the sacred anagram—Is the Likeness the same?

THE real crux of the question, so far as art, and archæology and history, are concerned, is whether symbol preceded portraiture, or portraiture preceded symbol. It is very curious to observe the attitude of the Reviewers on this subject. The Dean of Canterbury admits that portraiture was common in the days of the Apostles, and that antecedent probabilities point to some attempt having been made to preserve the features of the Lord. But he thinks that I assume for the rude outlines inlaid with gold on chalices and pateræ a very disputable age: and the Reviewer of "The Tablet," who thinks it is very difficult for a Protestant to write upon the subject without stumbling into heresy, says sarcastically, "Sir

Wyke Bayliss would not like to be told that the Linus and Damas, whose names appear on the relics, are Pope Marcellinus, A.D. 296, and Pope Damasus, A.D. 366." In a later article he has very courteously withdrawn this criticism. How could he do otherwise? He is a distinguished scholar, and a revered Bishop of the Church of Rome, and having made a mistake has had the courage and honour to say so. Nevertheless, to meet Dr. Farrar's difficulty, I must state briefly the grounds on which I assign these relics to the first century.

1st. These engraved portraits are described by writers of the second century as things of the past. Moreover, the use of glass for sacramental vessels was forbidden long before the days of the Popes Marcellinus and Damasus.

2nd. The portraits bear no symbols, nor sign, nor inscriptions, to indicate that they represent dignitaries of the third or fourth century. This cannot be explained if they represent the Popes named. Damasus was one of the first of the Bishops to wear a crown. A commemorative medal of him would have taken note of this; while Marcellinus must at least have been mitred. With the first Linus, the friend of Paul, however, it would have been different. If the portrait was engraved while S. Peter was still living, it is obvious that there would have been no ecclesiastical

insignia, for Linus had not then succeeded to the Chair.

3rd. The supposition that any of the letters or symbols have been obliterated is untenable. The gold is not raised as in metal work, nor painted on the surface as in fresco: it is embedded between two layers of glass which remain intact.

4th. The portraits are grouped with other portraits of men who lived, not in the third or fourth centuries, but in the first. They show Paul and Linus; Justus and Timothy; John, Peter, Paul, and Damas. Now we know that S. Paul had a friend and companion named Linus, who afterwards became Bishop of Rome. Had Marcellinus a friend also named Paul, who could have been grouped with him in portraiture? We know also that SS. John and Peter and Paul preached in the catacombs where these relics were found, and Damas may have befriended them. But had Damasus three friends named Peter, and John, and Paul who could have been grouped with him in a medallion? The answer to these simple questions will make clear why I consider these rude outlines to be of so early a date.

But "The Tablet" says, there are so few of these glass relics which bear the actual likeness, in comparison with the number which show Christ as the Good Shepherd—that is in symbol only;

and he refers to a pagefull in Father Garucci's book in which he cannot find a single example of the Likeness. But what does the Reviewer expect? Does he suppose that the Likeness began with thousands of portraits scattered broadcast? or not rather with a very limited number, of which some would be better than others, and becoming specially authenticated would be preserved with special care? That there were several originals is indicated by the fact that some are profiles, some in full face, and that the hair and beard vary considerably. But there cannot have been an unlimited number of likenesses in the first century, any more than there could have been an unlimited number of converts at that time in Rome. What are the undisputed facts? These glass pateræ do really exist, and date from the first to the fourth century. We know that some of them are of the earlier date, because Tertullian refers to them as having existed before his time. In most of them the face of Christ is conventional, but in a few the Likeness is as we know it to-day. Now it so happens that the examples which show the Likeness show also the actual portraits of Peter and Paul, and other disciples—evidently taken from life. It so happens also that these portraits are simply heads, without symbol. I infer from this that they were executed while the Apostles were still living. It is obvious, how-

ever, that if portraiture came first, when Christians were few, and symbolism came after, when Christians were many, the number of original portraits would be very small compared with the number of symbolic representations, repeated through several centuries of persecution, when the Church had frankly accepted symbolism. Many of the glass relics are no doubt of the third century—but some are of the first. And it is those which are of the first that bear the Likeness of Christ.

My answer, therefore, to the Bishop and to the Dean is the same. It is fourfold. I say as an artist that these rude outlines are portraits; as an archæologist, that they are consonant with the work of the first century; as a student of history, that they are referred to by writers of the second century as relics of the past; and as a believer in Christianity, that the features commemorated were too dear to the affections of the immediate followers of Christ to have been treated by them with levity or to have been made the subject of æsthetic idealisation.

CONFLICTING THEORIES

Is there any theory to account for the Likeness, except that it is indeed a portrait?

PASSING now from the criticisms of these two divines, whose names I venerate, and who have conferred an honour on me in reviewing my "Rex Regum," I turn to one who is so ardent in his opposition that he has pursued me through the columns of three journals, always, however, under the cover of anonymity. The journals in which his remarks appear—"The Times," "The Guardian," and "The Daily Graphic"—are rightly held in such high estimation that I must take note of his objections. And first of all he says: "There is no answer to Sir Wyke's argument: it is only one more instance of the fact that what people wish to believe they will believe."

Now this suggestion should not be despised. Of course it proves nothing: but it is well to

guard against a too credulous spirit. Let us apply the suggestion as a test to the argument of my anonymous opponent.

I notice that he himself believes that these early representations of Christ date from the second or third century. He thinks they may be eighteen hundred years old, but not nineteen hundred. His faith sticks at eighteen hundred. But why does it stick there? What is there in the second century to hold it? He does not tell us. Is it because he does not wish to believe that they date from the first? or is it because the whole ground is to him a terra incognita?

Let us see. It is natural that one who so vehemently opposes the belief in the authenticity of the Likeness of Christ should hold some theory of his own to account for its origin, and the tremendous fact of its acceptance, by all churches, all nations, all opposing interests, at all times, and in all places. My critic explains his theory in a letter to "The Guardian," in which he says: "All religionists, in all ages, have been impelled by the agency of art, to represent their gods. Thus we have such works from the hands of aboriginal tribes; worshippers of fetich; devotees of Buddha, Brahma, and the deities of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. It is no marvel then, that at the dawn of Christianity in Rome the devotional spirit was

passionately, if rudely, expressed in a manner which was but that of common human nature in its manifestation of religious worship. In the religions of the East, the worship of the non-existent was almost invariably accompanied by the evolutions of a personality represented in art. It was not a portrait that gave dignity to the Olympian Zeus, but the creation of a majestic ideal."

Now if Christianity began in fetichism—if Christ was indeed a myth, like Adonis, or Zeus—the analogy would hold good, and the Likeness may be a myth also. But the analogy fails altogether if Christianity is historically true, and Christ was a living man.

The argument reveals, however, why the critic is held fast to the second or third century as the date of these first representations of Christ. Unlike the Dean of Canterbury, who regards them as an aftergrowth of Christianity, he considers that they grew up together with Christianity—myth with myth—each supporting the other. But for a myth thus to crystallise into definite shape, time must be allowed. How long it took for the gods of Egypt, and Greece, and Rome to develop in the popular mind, no one can tell us. But in the case of the Christian religion the time is strictly within known limits. Our critic cannot go back beyond the records of Christ's life with-

out interfering with the history of the Cæsars. He cannot go forward beyond the reign of Constantine, for by that time the thing was done—the Creed was fixed as we know it to-day—and the Likeness had become a possession common to Christendom. Above all, he cannot, any more than the Dean, attribute the creation of an imaginary likeness to a generation which had seen Christ face to face. S. John, who lived to the very close of the first century, would have denounced it as untrue. This leaves at his disposal only the two centuries he has named. It is therefore vital to his theory of the evolution of Christianity from myth, that the Likeness should have been evolved during that period. What are the wishes of our critic on the subject he does not confide to us. He does not say, as I do in "Rex Regum," "my belief makes me glad." But whether he is glad or sorry, if his theory is true, both Christ and the Likeness of Christ are myths.

I turn now to another theory—that of Mrs. Jameson. Is it more tenable?

Mrs. Jameson's theory is that in the early days of Christianity the faculty of representing individual expression was undeveloped in art. As long therefore as Christ was depicted like other men, and other men like Him, He cannot be said

to have had a character of His own. No type, strictly speaking, could begin till Christ stood isolated by the personal individuality of those around Him."

Not, observe, His own individuality—*that* is not yet called into existence, according to this theory of evolution by retrogression—but *the individuality of those around Him.* This seems a little curious at first; but, if it were true, how it would sweep away the Likeness, to the limbo of the spurious gospels! It is not true. Amongst the earliest frescoes of the catacombs are to be found groups of figures representing our Lord and the Apostles. One of these will be found on Plate IX. We know that they are intended for our Lord and the Apostles, because they represent thirteen men, seated at a table, one of them in the midst, as at the Last Supper. But the curious thing is this. Ten of the thirteen faces are all alike. They are dummies of a common Roman type, differentiated from each other neither by beard, nor by arrangement of the hair, nor by expression. They are not portraits; unless, indeed, ten of the Apostles were cast in the same mould. But the three central figures are very different. The one in the midst is Christ, as we know His face to-day; the one on His right shows the curly head of Peter; the one on the left the beardless face of John. Now it will be

remembered that these two men, Peter and John, were evangelists in Rome, had preached in the catacombs, where this fresco was painted, and were well known to the Roman converts; while, so far as we can tell, the ten were unknown. It is obvious, therefore, that these first Christians, accustomed as they were to portraiture, adopted portraiture so far as it was practicable; and that only when they could give the artist no model or authentic record of the Likeness, were they content with imaginary faces. Mrs. Jameson's theory, that the face of Christ is only the residuum of the work of incapable artists, the last remaining of a series of dummies, distinguishable from the rest because it remained dead while the others came to life, is absolutely untenable. Let us turn to some theory less erratic.

I will call it the "vulgar theory." Vulgar that is, in the old-fashioned meaning of the word—common. I know not who is to be regarded as the author of it, but it pervades the current literature of the day, and appears to satisfy the ecclesiastical mind. I have seen it expressed in these words by a correspondent in "The Standard": "The modern type is not an original likeness carefully handed down, it is a likeness which Christian Art has gradually created as its ideal of the Son of man."

To deal fully with this theory would be to write "Rex Regum" over again. The reader has only to turn to the likenesses to perceive that, whatever other theory may be maintained, the vulgar theory collapses at every point. The head by Michael Angelo (Plate XXVI)—magnificent in its strength—is not a creation of his own, or of the great painters of the Renascence, nor did it grow up during the dark ages. It is a transcript of a likeness carefully handed down from the earliest ages of Christianity—and now as carefully preserved for future ages in the church of S. Silvestro—of which I give a facsimile on Plate XV. The debased likeness on Plate XVIII., which is of the ninth century, is not an improvement on the first frescoes of the catacombs shown on Plates VII, VIII, and IX. It is an unconscious caricature of them, executed in the very period in which this absurd theory assumes that the Likeness was growing up. Once more, the great painters of the modern schools, from Titian and Raphael and Correggio to Bonnat and Fritz von Uhde and Holman Hunt, did not take up the debasements of the Middle Ages, but swept them clean away—going straight back to the frescoes of the catacombs, the face-cloths of the martyrs, and the glass pateræ of the communion table before it became an altar. I ask my readers to look carefully through the illustrations on Plates XX to

XL, reproduced from the works of twenty of the greatest painters the world has known, and then to turn to the Callistine portrait on Plate VII, one of the despised frescoes of the catacombs. He will need no further argument to dispose of the theory that the Likeness came by process of evolution.

There is yet one more theory to be examined. I find it in the "Agnostic Journal." It is, frankly, that the Likeness is fictitious, the early history of Christianity having been not only tinctured with, but absolutely baptised in forgery and fraud. This is plain speaking. It should be noted, however, that the words "fraud" and "forgery" represent the real substance of which the words "ideal" and "imaginary" are euphuisms. The four words in this case have the same meaning, and lead to the same issue.

THE END.

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